MAORI AND SETTLER

· BY · G · A · HENTY ·

Happy New Year

1900.

To Louie

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Maori.

MR. ATHERTON TO THE RESCUE.—Page 52.

MAORI AND SETTLER

A STORY OF THE NEW ZEALAND WAR

BY

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CHICAGO
GEO. M. HILL CO.
PUBLISHERS

PREFACE.

My Dear Lads: In the following story I have made no attempt to give anything like a general history of the long struggle between the brave tribes of New Zealand and the forces of England and the colony. That struggle lasted over a period of some years, and to do justice to its numerous incidents in the course of a single volume would have left no space whatever available for the telling of a story. It was divided into two distinct epochs. In the first the natives of the north of the islands fought for their independence and their right to have a king, and be governed by their own laws. Nothing could exceed the courage with which they struggled for these ends, and it needed a very strong force of British troops to storm their pahs or fortified camps, and overcome their resistance. The second epoch embraces the struggle brought about by the conversion of a portion of the tribes to the fanatical belief called the Pai Marire (literally "good and peaceful"), whose votaries were generally known as the Hau-Haus. During the earlier war the natives behaved with great moderation, and there were but few cases of the murder of outlying settlers. The slaying of all whites was, however, the leading feature of the Hau-Hau religion, and many cold-blooded massacres occurred during the struggle. The British troops had been for the most part withdrawn before the commence-

ment of the Hau-Hau troubles, and the war was carried on by bodies of constabulary raised by the colonists, and with the aid of tribes that remained friendly to us. The massacre of Poverty Bay, which forms the leading feature of my story, and the events that followed it, are all strictly in accordance with facts.

Yours sincerely,

G. A. HENTY.

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MAORI AND SETTLER.

CHAPTER I.

A HOME BROKEN UP.

"Well, mother, one thing is certain—something has got to be done. It is no use crying over spilled milk, that I can see. It is a horribly bad business, but grieving over it won't make it any better. What one has got to do is to decide on some plan or other, and then set to work to carry it out."

The speaker, Wilfrid Renshaw, was a boy between fifteen and sixteen years old. He was standing with his back to an empty fireplace, his feet well apart, his hands deep in his pockets. He was rather short for his age, but very squarely built. His hair was dark, cut rather short, and so ruffled over his head that there were no signs of a parting; his eyebrows were heavy, his eyes bright but rather deeply set; his chin was square and his jaw heavy; his nose was a little upturned, and this together with his eyes gave a merry expression to a face that would otherwise have been heavy and stern.

At school Wilfrid Renshaw had been regarded as rather a queer fellow. He was full of quiet fun, and saw a humorous side in everything. He did not take a very leading part in the various school sports, though there was a general idea that if Renshaw only chose to exert himself he could excel in any of them. In point of actual

strength, although there were several boys in the school older than himself, it was generally admitted that he was by far the strongest there. But he always went his own way and always knew his own mind, and when he had once given his decision everyone knew that it was of no use attempting to alter it; indeed, his reputation for obstinacy was so great that when he had once said "I won't" or "I will," no one ever attempted to argue with him.

He was given to long walks and to collecting insects or flowers. He could never be persuaded to make one of the cricket eleven; but in winter, when there was little scope for his favorite pursuit, he threw himself into football; and although he absolutely refused to accept the captaincy when unanimously elected to that honor, he was considered by far the most valuable member of the team. He was scarcely popular among the boys of his own age; for although his fun and general good temper were appreciated by them, his determination to go his own way, and his entire disregard for the opinion of others, caused him to be considered an unsociable sort of fellow, an impression increased by the fact that he had no particular chums.

Among the smaller boys he was greatly liked. He would never allow any bullying when he was present; and although his interference was often resented by some of the elders, his reputation for strength and obstinacy was so great that he had never been called upon to take active measures to support his decisively expressed opinions. His father lived in a pretty house a quarter of a mile outside Reading; and as Wilfrid attended the grammar-school there, he was much more free to indulge his own tastes and go his own way than if he had been in a boarding-school. His chief companion in his rambles was his only sister Marion, who was a year his senior,

although strangers would not have taken her to be so, either from her appearance or manner. She had an active, lithe figure, and was able to keep up with him even during his longest excursions. They were in fact great chums and allies, and Marion would have indignantly scouted the idea had any one suggested to her that her brother was either obstinate or unsociable.

Mr. Renshaw had been intended for the bar, and had indeed been called to that profession; but shortly afterward he came into a fortune at the death of his father, and at once abandoned all idea of practicing. After traveling for a few years on the Continent and in the East, he married and settled down near Reading. His time was for the most part devoted to archæology. He had a rare collection of ancient British, Saxon, and Norman arms, ornaments, and remains of all sorts; had written several books on the antiquities of Berkshire and Oxfordshire; was an authority upon tumuli and stone weapons; and was regarded by his acquaintances as a man of much learning.

The management of the house and children, and indeed of all affairs unconnected with his favorite hobby, he left to his wife, who was, fortunately for him, a clear-headed and sensible woman. Mr. Renshaw was, in fact, an eminently impractical man, weak and easy in disposition, averse to exertion of any kind, and without a shadow of the decision of character that distinguished his son. Except when away upon antiquarian excursions he passed his time entirely in his own study, engaged upon a work which, he anticipated, would gain for him a very high position among the antiquarians of the country, the subject being the exact spot at which Julius Cæsar landed in Britain.

He made his appearance only at meal-times, and then

paid but little attention to what was going on around him, although he was kind to his children in a gentle, indifferent sort of way. For many years he had been engaged in making up his mind as to the school to which Wilfrid should be sent; and the boy had at first only been sent to the grammar school at the suggestion of his mother as a temporary measure until the important decision should be arrived at. This had been six years before, and Mr. Renshaw had postponed his decision until it was too late for Wilfrid to enter at any of the great public schools.

Knowing from long experience what would be the result were he consulted as to Marion's education, Mrs. Renshaw had, when the girl was nine years old, engaged a governess for her without any previous consultation with her husband, simply telling him of the arrangement after it was concluded, saying: "I know, Alfred, that you have not yet decided whether an education at home or at school is best for a girl, and I have consequently arranged with a young lady to come as governess until you can come to a conclusion upon the point."

Wilfrid Renshaw was extremely fond of his mother. His father he regarded with a somewhat contemptuous kind of affection. He did not doubt that he was a very learned man, but he had small patience with his inability to make up his mind, his total want of energy, and his habit of leaving everything for his wife to decide upon and carry out.

"It would do father an immense deal of good if something were to happen that would wake him up a bit and get him to take an interest in things," he had said over and over again to Marion. "I cannot understand a man having no opinion of his own about anything."

"I do not think you ought to speak in that sort of way, Wil, about father."

"Oh, that is all nonsense, Marion. One cannot be blind about a person, even if he is one's own father. Of course, he is very kind and very indulgent, but it would be very much pleasanter if he were so because he wished to give us pleasure, instead of because it is the easiest thing to do. I should be downright pleased if sometimes when I ask him for anything he would say positively I could not have it."

Now the something that Wilfrid had hoped might occur to rouse his father had taken place, and had come in a form very unpleasantly violent and unexpected. The papers a week before had brought the news of the failure of the bank in which the greater portion of Mr. Renshaw's property was invested, and a letter had the following morning been received from a brother of Mrs. Renshaw, who was also a shareholder in the bank, saying that the liabilities were very large, and that the shareholders would undoubtedly be called upon to pay even their last penny to make up the deficiency. This news had been confirmed, and there could be no doubt absolute ruin had fallen upon them.

Mr. Renshaw had been completely overwhelmed by the tidings, and had taken to his bed. Wilfrid's holidays had begun a few days before, and his mother at once acquainted him with the misfortune that had befallen them, and she now told him that the calls that would be made upon the shares would more than swallow up the rest of their fortune.

"There will be absolutely nothing remaining, Wilfrid, except a thousand pounds that I had at my marriage, and which were fortunately settled upon me. This cannot be touched. Everything else will have to go."

"Well, it's a bad business, mother. I will go for a walk and think it over. Marion, put on your hat and come out with me."

They had been for their walk—a long one, and he was now expressing the result at which they had arrived.

"One thing is certain—something has got to be done."

"Yes," Mrs. Renshaw replied, with a faint smile. "The question is, What is it?"

"Well, mother, it is quite certain that we four cannot live on the interest of a thousand pounds unless we go into a hovel and live on bread and water."

"I quite see that, Wilfrid; but I am sure I do not see how we are to earn money. It is far too late for your father to go back to the bar now, and it might be years before he got a brief. At any rate, we could not afford to live in London till he does so. I have been thinking I might open a little school somewhere."

The boy waved his hand.

"No, mother, you are not going to take us all on to your shoulders. You have got to look after father; that will be a full share of the work, I am sure. Marion and I have been talking it over, and the only possible thing we can see is for us to emigrate."

"To emigrate!" Mrs. Renshaw repeated in astonishment. "Why, my dear boy, what should we be fit for in the colonies more than here?"

"A good deal, mother. A thousand pounds is nothing here, and it would be a good deal out there. It would be horrible to come down to live in a little cottage like working people here, after living like this; but it would be nothing out there. We could buy land for next to nothing in New Zealand, and could employ a couple of men to work with me to clear it and cultivate it; and get a few cows and sheep to start with, and still have a little money in hand. You and Marion could look after things indoors; I should look after things out of doors."

"You don't seem to count your father at all," Mrs. Renshaw said a little reproachfully.

"No, mother, I don't," Wilfrid said bluntly. "You know as well as I do that father would be of no use to speak of in a life like that. Still, I think he could make himself happy out there as well as here. He could take all his books with him, and could inquire into the manners and customs of the natives, who are every bit as good as the ancient Britons; better, I should say. But whatever we do, mother, whether it is here or anywhere else, we must settle upon it and do it. Of course we must consult him; but we must quite make up our minds before we do so. If you wait a few weeks for father to make up his mind what we had better do, we shall wait till this thousand pounds is spent and there is nothing to do but to go into the workhouse.

"I am sure that my plan is the best for us. I am as strong as a great many men; and anyhow, out there, there ought to be no fear about our keeping ourselves. I have no doubt that when we get out there father will be able to help in many ways, though I do not know at present what they are. Anyhow, we shall have a house to live in, even if it is only a log hut, and I have no doubt have plenty to eat and drink; and that is more than we shall do if we stay here. I could not earn anything to speak of here; the most I could expect to get would be ten shillings a week as an office-boy. And as to your idea of a school, you might be years before you got pupils; and, beside, when there are two men in a family it would be shameful to depend upon a woman to keep them."

"Why do you think of New Zealand more than Canada, Wil?"

"Because, in the first place, the climate is a great deal pleasanter, and, in the second place, I believe that as the passage-money is higher the emigrants are of a better class, and we are likely to have more pleasant neighbors

—people that you and father can associate with—than we should have if we went to a backwoods clearing in Canada. Tom Fairfax has an uncle in New Zealand, and I have heard him say there are lots of officers in the army and people of that sort who have settled there. Of course I know it is going to be hard work, and that it will be very rough for you and father when we land at first, but I expect it will be better after a time; and anyhow, mother, I do not think we can starve there, and I feel sure that it will come to that if we stop here. At any rate, you had better think it over.

"Of course if you hit on anything better I shall be ready to agree at once; but whatever it is we must quite make up our minds together and then tell father. But when we do tell him we shall have to say that we are quite convinced that the plan we have fixed on is the only one that offers a hope of success. Of course I do not expect that he will see it as we do, but if we put it that if he can suggest anything better to be done we will set about it at once, I think he's pretty certain to let things go on as we arrange. I do not mean to speak disrespectfully of father," he went on, seeing that his mother's face was a little clouded, "but you know, mother, that people who are learned, scientific, and all that sort of thing are very often bad hands at everyday matters. Sir Isaac Newton, and lots of other fellows I have read about, were like that; and though father is a splendid hand at anything to do with the Britons or Danes, and can tell you the story of every old ruin in the kingdom, he is no good about practical matters. So that we take all the trouble off his hands, I think he will be quite ready to agree to do whatever you think is the best. At any rate, mother, I think my plan is well worth thinking over, and the sooner we make up our minds the better; after all it is a

great thing having something to look forward to and plan about."

Three or four days later Mrs. Renshaw told Wilfrid that think as she would she could see no better plan for utilizing her little capital than for them to emigrate.

"It is putting great responsibility on your shoulders, my boy," she said; "for I do not disguise from myself that it is upon you that we must principally depend. Still you will be sixteen by the time we can arrive there, and I think we should be able to manage. Besides, as you say, we can hire a man or two to help, and shall have some money to fall back upon until things begin to pay. There are plenty of women who manage even without the assistance of a son, and I do not know why I should not be able to get on with you and Marion to help me, especially as farming is a comparatively simple business in a new country. At any rate, as you say, with two or three cows and plenty of ducks and hens, and what we can grow on the ground, there will be no fear of our starving."

The next day Mr. Renshaw came downstairs for the first time since he had heard of the misfortune. He had received a letter that morning saying that a call was at once to be made on each shareholder for the amount still standing on each share, and this sum was in itself more than he could meet even after the sale of his house and its contents. He was in a state of profound depression. He had, while upstairs, been endeavoring to think of some means of supporting his family, but had been wholly unable to think of any plan whatever. He knew that at his age he should find it next to impossible to obtain employment, even as a clerk at the lowest salary; his knowledge of archæology would be absolutely useless to him, for the books he had already published had not even paid the expenses of printing.

Few words were spoken at breakfast, but when the meal was finished Mrs. Renshaw began: "My dear Alfred, Wilfrid and I have been talking over what we had better do under the circumstances. I have told him that the failure of the bank involves the loss of all our property, that the house will have to be sold, and that, in fact, there remains nothing but the thousand pounds of my settlement. We have talked it over in every light, and have quite arrived at the conclusion as to what we think the best thing to be done if you see matters in the same light and will consent to our plan. I had at first thought of starting a little school."

"I would never agree to that," Mr. Renshaw said; "never. I must do something, my dear, though I have not made up my mind in what direction. But whatever it is, it is for me to work, and not for you."

"Well, we have already given up the idea," Mrs. Renshaw went on. "Wilfrid was sure that you would not like it, and, as he pointed out, the money might be spent before I could obtain sufficient pupils to pay. Beside, he is anxious to be of use; but the difficulty struck us of obtaining any kind of remunerative work here."

"That is what I have been thinking," Mr. Renshaw said. "I shall be willing to work at anything in my power, but I don't see what possible work I can get."

"Quite so, my dear. In this country it is of course terribly difficult for any one to get employment unless he has been trained in some particular line, therefore Wil and I are agreed that the very best plan, indeed the only plan we can think of, is for us to go out to a new country. My little money will take us to New Zealand, buy a good-sized piece of land there, and suffice to enable us to clear it and stock it to some extent. The life will no doubt be rough for us all for a time; but none of us will care

for that, and at any rate we are sure to be able to keep the wolf from the door."

"To New Zealand!" Mr. Renshaw repeated, aghast. "That is a terrible undertaking. Beside, I know nothing whatever about farming, and I fear that I am quite unfit for hard work."

"I do not think it will be at all necessary for you to work yourself, Alfred. Of course we can hire men there just as we can in England. I believe the natives are willing to work at very low rates of pay, so we need have no difficulty on that score. Wilfrid is growing up now, and will soon be able to relieve you of all responsibility, and then you will be able to devote yourself to your favorite studies; and I should think that a book from your hand upon native manners and customs would be sure to be a great success. Accustomed as you are to tracing things up from small remains, and with your knowledge of primitive peoples, your work would be very different from those written by men without any previous acquaintance with such matters."

"The idea certainly pleases me," Mr. Renshaw said; "but, of course, I shall want time to think over your startling proposal, Helen."

"Of course, my dear. In the meantime we will go on packing up and preparing to move at once from here, as you say that there must be a sale of everything; then you can think the matter over, and if you decide upon any better scheme than ours we can carry that out. If not, we shall be ready to put ours into execution."

The next month was a busy one. There was great sympathy evinced by all the Renshaws' neighbors and acquaintances when it was heard that their whole fortune was swept away by the failure of the bank. There were farewell visits to be paid, not only to these, but to their

poorer neighbors. In answer to inquiries as to their plans, Mr. Renshaw always replied that at present nothing whatever was settled. Mrs. Renshaw hinted that, although their plans were not definitely fixed, she thought it probable that they would go abroad; while Wilfrid and Marion both informed their friends confidently that they were going to New Zealand.

The work of packing went on. A few articles of furniture that were special favorites with them all were packed up and sent to be warehoused in London, in order that they might some day be forwarded to them when they had made themselves a home; but nothing else was taken beyond their clothes, a good selection of books for their general reading, a large box of those which Mr. Renshaw declared absolutely indispensable to himself, and a few knickknacks specially prized. Everything else was handed over for sale for the benefit of the creditors of the bank. During these weeks Mr. Renshaw continued to speak as if he regarded the New Zealand project as wholly impracticable, and on each occasion when he did so his wife replied cheerfully: "Well, my dear, we are in no way wedded to it, and are quite ready to give it up and adopt any plan you may decide upon. The matter is entirely in your hands."

But Mr. Renshaw could hit upon no other scheme; and, indeed, his wife's suggestion as to a book on the natives of New Zealand had much taken his fancy. Certainly he, a trained antiquarian, should be able to produce a book upon such a subject that would be of vastly greater value than those written by settlers and others having no training whatever that would qualify them for such work. It was probable that he should be able to throw some entirely new light upon the origin and history of the Maoris or natives of New Zealand, and that

his book would greatly add to his reputation, and would sell well. Really the idea was not such a very bad one, and, for himself, he should certainly prefer a life in a new country to shabby lodgings in some out-of-the-way place, after having for so many years been a personage of importance in his own neighborhood.

"I see one great objection to your scheme, Helen, and that is that there is a war going on with the Maoris."

"I know there is," Mrs. Renshaw, who had talked the matter over with Wilfrid, replied; "but it is confined to two or three of the tribes, and the settlers in other parts have been in no way disturbed. The troops have taken most of their strongholds, and the troubles are considered to be approaching an end; therefore I do not think there is any occasion to be uneasy on that score. Beside, in some respects the trouble will be advantageous, as we should probably be able to buy land cheaper than we otherwise should have done, and the land will rapidly rise in value again when the disturbances are over. But, of course, we should not go to the disturbed districts. These are round Auckland and New Plymouth, and the troubles are confined to the tribes there. Everything is perfectly peaceable along the other parts of the coast."

It was not until two or three days before the move was to be made from the house that Mrs. Renshaw recurred to the subject.

"You have not said yet, Alfred, what plans you have decided upon. As we shall leave here in three days it is quite time that we made up our minds about it, as, of course, our movements must depend on your decision. If you have fixed upon any place for us to settle down in, it would be cheaper for us to move there at once instead of wasting money by going up to London first. Another reason I have for asking is, that Robert and William

Grimstone, the gardener's sons, who have got an idea from something Wilfrid said to them that we might be going abroad, have asked him to ask you if you would take them with you. They have been working in the garden under their father for the last two or three years, and are strong, active young fellows of nineteen and twenty. As their father has worked here ever since we came, and we have known the young fellows since they were children, such an arrangement would have been a very pleasant one had you liked my plan of emigrating as it would have been much more agreeable having two young fellows we knew with us instead of strangers. Of course I told Wilfrid to tell them that nothing whatever was settled, and that our plans were not in any way formed, and that they had better, therefore, look out for situations about here, and that I was sure you would give them good letters of recommendation."

Mr. Renshaw was silent. "I really do not see that there is any occasion to come to a decision in a hurry," he said irritably.

"Not in a hurry, Alfred," his wife said quietly. "You see we have had a month to think it over and I do not see that we shall be more likely to settle upon an advantageous scheme at the end of six months than we are now. From the day we leave here and hand over everything to the receiver of the bank we shall be drawing on our little capital, and every pound is of importance. I think therefore, Alfred, that you and I should make up our minds before we leave here as to what course we are going to adopt. As I have said, I myself see no scheme by which we are likely to be able to maintain ourselves in England, even in a very humble way. A life in the colonies would, to me, be very much more pleasant than the struggle to make ends meet here.

"It would afford an opening for Wilfrid, and be vastly more advantageous for him than anything we should hope to get for him here; and I think it will be far better for Marion too. Of course, if we decided to emigrate, we could, should you prefer it, go to Canada, Australia, or the United States in preference to New Zealand. I only incline to New Zealand because I have heard that there is a larger proportion of officers and gentlemen there than in other colonies, and because I believe that the climate is a particularly pleasant one. But, of course, this is merely a suggestion at present, and it is for you to decide."

"If we are to emigrate at all," Mr. Renshaw replied, "I should certainly prefer New Zealand myself. The Maoris are a most interesting people. Their origin is a matter of doubt, their customs and religion are peculiar, and I have no doubt that I should, after studying them, be able to throw much new and valuable light upon the subject. Personally, I am sure that I am in no way fitted for the life of a settler. I know nothing of farming, and could neither drive a plow nor wield an ax; but if I could make the native subject my own, I might probably be able to do my share toward our expenses by my books, while Wilfrid could look after the men. The offer of these two young fellows to go with us has removed several of my objections to the plan, and I agree with you that it would be more advantageous for Wilfrid and Marion than to be living in wretched lodgings. Therefore, my dear, I have decided to fall in with your plan, and only hope that it will turn out as well as you seem to expect. It will be a great change and a great trial; but since you seem to have set your heart upon it, I am willing to adopt your plans instead of my own, and we will therefore consider it settled that we will go to New Zealand."

Mrs. Renshaw was too wise a woman to point out that her husband had not, so far as she was aware, any plans whatever of his own, and she contented herself by saying quietly: "I am glad you have decided so, my dear. I do think it is the best thing for us all, and I am quite sure it is the best for Wilfrid and Marion. If it had not been for them I should have said let us take a tiny cottage near some town where I might add to our income by giving lessons in music or other things, and you might have the companionship of people of your own tastes; but, being as it is, I think it far better to give them a start in a new country, although I know that such a life as we shall lead there must entail, at any rate at first, some hardships, and the loss of much to which we have been accustomed."

Wilfrid and Marion were delighted when they heard from their mother that the matter was settled. Both had had great hopes that Wilfrid's scheme would be finally accepted, as there did not seem any other plan that was possible. Still Wilfrid knew the difficulty that his father would have in making up his mind, and feared there might be a long delay before he could bring himself to accept the plan proposed to him. Mrs. Renshaw, who was a good business woman, lost no time in arranging with Robert and William Grimstone as to their accompanying them. Their passage-money was to be paid, and they were to bind themselves to remain for three years in Mr. Renshaw's service on wages similar to those they would have obtained at home; after that, they were to be paid whatever might be the colonial rate of wages.

The excitement that the prospect of emigration caused to the young people lessened their pain at leaving the house where they had been born and brought up, with all its pleasant associations and material comforts. It was,

however, very trying to them when they bade good-by for the last time to their surroundings and shook hands with their old servants.

"If ever we get rich in New Zealand, father," Wilfrid said, "we will come back and buy the house again."

Mr. Renshaw shook his head. Just at present he was disposed to regard himself as a martyr, and considered that he had made an unprecedented sacrifice of his own wishes and comforts for the sake of his children, and that no good could be expected to arise from the plan to which he had consented. A good many friends had gathered at the station to say good-by, and it was some time after the train had started on its way to London before any of the party felt themselves inclined to speak. On arriving in town they went at once to lodgings they had engaged in Eastbourne Terrace, facing the station. Once settled there, no time was lost in making preparations for their voyage. The files of the advertisements had already been searched and the names of the vessels sailing for New Zealand and the addresses of their owners noted, and after paying a visit to several shipping offices the choice of vessels remained at last between the Flying Scud and the Mayflower. They were vessels of about the same size, both bore a good reputation as sailers, and they heard excellent accounts of the captains who commanded them.

The Mayflower was to sail direct to Wellington round the Cape. The Flying Scud was taking in cargo for Rio and Buenos Ayres, and would proceed thence via Cape Horn. Her rates of passage were somewhat lower than those of the Mayflower, as the route via the Cape of Good Hope was that more generally used, and the number of passengers who had secured berths by her were very much smaller than those who intended to travel by the

Mayflower. It was this that principally decided them in choosing the western route; Mr. Renshaw was in a depressed and nervous state, and his wife considered that he would be far more comfortable with a comparatively small number of fellow-passengers than in a crowded ship.

Marion quite agreed with her mother; and Wilfrid was also in favor of the Flying Scud, as he thought it would be pleasant to break the passage by putting into the great South American ports and getting a glimpse of their inhabitants. Mr. Renshaw himself was quite satisfied to accept his wife's decision, whatever it might be. The Flying Scud was therefore selected, and passages for the party secured in her.

CHAPTER II.

THE EMBARKATION.

The Flying Scud was to sail in ten days; and this was ample time for their preparations, for Mrs. Renshaw wisely decided that it was better to buy all that was requisite for starting their new life in New Zealand.

"We have none of us the least idea what will be required," she said. "It will be far better to pay somewhat higher prices for what we really do want out there than to cumber ourselves with all sorts of things that may be useless to us. We have already a considerable amount of baggage. There are our clothes, linen, and books, your father's two double-barreled guns, which, by the way, I do not think he has ever used since we have been married. The only thing we had better get, as far as I see, will be four rifles, which no doubt we can buy cheap second-hand, and four revolvers.

"I do not for a moment suppose we shall ever want to use them, but as we may be often left in the house alone I think it would be pleasant to know that we are not altogether defenseless. We had better lay in a good stock of ammunition for all these weapons. Besides the clothes we have we had better get serge dresses and suits for the voyage, and a few strong, serviceable gowns and suits for rough work out there. Beyond this I do not think that we need spend a penny. We can certainly get everything we shall want for our new life at Wellington, which is a large place."

On the morning of the day on which they were to embark the Grimstones came up from Reading. All the heavy luggage had been sent on board ship on the previous day, and at twelve o'clock two cabs drove up to the side of the Flying Scud in St. Catherine's Docks. The one contained Mr and Mrs. Renshaw, Marion, and a vast quantity of small packets inside. Wilfrid was on the box with the driver, and the roof was piled high with luggage. The other cab contained the two Grimstones and the rest of the luggage. The Renshaws were already acquainted with the ship in which they were to sail, having paid her a visit four days previously to see their cabins. The parents had a comfortable cabin to themselves. Marion was berthed in a cabin with two other ladies, who, she learned, were sisters, the elder about her own age, and Wilfrid found he would have but one fellow-passenger. The Grimstones were in the steerage forward.

The vessel was in a state of bustle, and what to the travelers seemed confusion. Numbers of other passengers were arriving, and the deck was littered with their luggage until it could be sorted and sent down to their cabins; late cargo was being swung on board and lowered into the hold. On the deck aft were gathered the cabin passengers, with relatives and friends who had come to see them off. An hour later the bell rang as a signal for all visitors to go ashore. There were sad partings both fore and aft as the bell clanged on its impatient signal.

"I am very glad, mother, that we have no friends to say good-by to us here, and that we got that all over at Reading."

"So am I, Wil. I think it much better myself that these partings should be got through before people leave home. It is natural of course that relatives and friends

should like to see the last of each other, but I think it is a cruel kindness, and am glad, as you say, that we had no dear friends in London. Those at home have already shown their thoughtfulness and friendship." For indeed during the last few days hampers of presents of all kinds had arrived in a steady flow at Eastbourne Terrace. There had been great feeling of commiseration among all their acquaintances at the misfortune that had befallen the Renshaws; and the manner in which they had at once surrendered everything for the benefit of the shareholders of the bank, and the calmness with which they had borne their reverses, had excited admiration, and scarce a friend or acquaintance but sent substantial tokens of their good-will or sympathy.

As soon as it was publicly known that the Renshaws were about to sail for New Zealand, the boys and masters of the grammar-school between them subscribed and sent a handsome double-barreled gun, a fishing rod, and all appurtenances, to Wilfrid. Mr. Renshaw received two guns, several fishing rods, two crates of crockery, and several cases of portable furniture of various kinds, beside many small articles. Mrs. Renshaw was presented with a stove of the best construction and a crate full of utensils of every kind, while Marion had work-boxes and desks sufficient to stock a school, two sets of garden tools and innumerable knickknacks likely to be more or less useful to her in her new life. Beside these there were several boxes of books of standard literature.

"Everyone is very kind," Mrs. Renshaw said, as the crates and hampers arrived; "but if it goes on like this we shall have to charter a ship to ourselves, and how we are to move about there when we get out with all these things I have not the least idea."

At last the good-bys were all finished, the visitors had

left the ship, the hawsers were thrown off, and the vessel began to move slowly toward the dock gates. As soon as she had issued through these she was seized by a tug, and proceeded in tow down the crowded river. There was a last waving of handkerchiefs and hats to the group of people standing at the entrance to the docks, and then the passengers began to look round and examine each other and the ship. Sailors were hard at work—the last bales and boxes were being lowered into the hold, ropes were being coiled up, and tidiness restored to the deck. Parties of seamen were aloft loosening some of the sails, for the wind was favorable, and the captain had ordered some of the canvas to be set to assist the tug.

"Now, Marion," Mrs. Renshaw said, "we had better go below and tidy up things a bit. Wil, you may as well come down and help me get the trunks stowed away under the berths, and put some hooks in for the brush-bags and other things we have brought; the hooks and gimlet are in my handbag."

Wilfrid assisted to set his mother's cabin in order, and then went to his own. It was a good-sized cabin, and when the ship was full accommodated four passengers; but the two upper bunks had now been taken down, and there was, Wilfrid thought, ample room for two. On his own bunk were piled his two portmanteaus, a gun-case, a bundle of fishing rods, and other odds and ends, and a somewhat similar collection of luggage was on that opposite. Wilfrid read the name on the labels. "Atherton," he said; "I wonder what he is like. I do hope he will be a nice fellow."

Scarcely had the thought passed through his mind when a figure appeared at the cabin door. It was that of a tall, stout man, with immensely broad shoulders. His age Wilfrid guessed to be about thirty-five. He had a

pleasant face, and there was a humorous twinkle in his eye as the lad looked round in astonishment at the figure completely blocking up the doorway.

"So you are Renshaw?" the big man said. "I congratulate myself and you that your dimensions are not of the largest. My name is Atherton, as I dare say you have seen on my luggage. Suppose we shake hands, Renshaw? It is just as well to make friends at once, as we have got to put up with each other for the next five or six months. Of course you are a little appalled at my size," he went on, as he shook hands with the lad. "Most people are at first, but nobody is so much appalled as I am myself. Still it has its amusing side, you know. I don't often get into an omnibus, because I do not think it is fair; but if I am driven to do so, and there happen to be five people on each side, the expression of alarm on those ten faces when I appear at the door is a picture, because it is manifestly impossible that they can make room for me on either side."

"What do you do, sir?" Wilfrid asked, laughing.

"I ask one of them to change sides. That leaves two places vacant, and as I make a point of paying for two, we get on comfortably enough. It is fortunate there are only two of us in this cabin. If I have the bad luck to travel in a full ship I always wait until the others are in bed before I turn in, and get up in the morning before they are astir; but I think you and I can manage pretty comfortably."

"Then you have traveled a good deal, sir?" Wilfrid said.

"I am always traveling," the other replied. "I am like the fidgety Phil of the story book, who could never keep still. Most men of my size are content to take life quietly, but that is not so with me. For the last twelve

or thirteen years I have been always on the move, and I ought to be worn down to a thread paper; but unfortunately, as you see, that is not the effect of travel in my case. I suppose you are going out to settle?"

"Yes, sir. I have my father, mother, and sister on board."

"Lucky fellow!" Mr. Atherton said; "I have no relations worth speaking of."

"Are you going to settle at last, sir?" Wilfrid asked.

"No, I am going out to botanize. I have a mania for botany, and New Zealand, you know, is in that respect one of the most remarkable regions in the world, and it has not yet been explored with anything approaching accuracy. It is a grand field for discovery, and there are special points of interest connected with it, as it forms a sort of connecting link between the floras of Australia, Asia, and South America, and has a flora of its own entirely distinct from any of these. Now let me advise you as to the stowing away of your traps. There is a good deal of knack in these things. Have you got your portmanteaus packed so that one contains all the things you are likely to require for say the first month of your voyage, and the other as a reserve to be drawn on occasionally? because, if not, I should advise you to take all the things out and to arrange them in that way. It will take you a little time, perhaps, but will save an immense amount of trouble throughout the voyage."

Wilfrid had packed his trunks with things as they came to hand, but he saw the advantage of following his fellow-passenger's advice, and accordingly opened his portmanteaus and piled the whole of their contents upon his berth. He then repacked them, Mr. Atherton sitting down on his berth and giving his advice as to the trunk in which each article should be placed.

The work of rearrangement occupied half an hour, and Wilfrid often congratulated himself during the voyage upon the time so spent. When all was complete and the cabin arranged tidily, Wilfrid looked in at the next cabin. This was occupied by two young men of the name of Allen. They were friends of an acquaintance of Mr. Renshaw, who, hearing that they were journeying by the same ship to New Zealand, had brought them down to Eastbourne Terrace and introduced them to Mr. Renshaw and his family. The two were occupied in arranging their things in the cabin.

"Well, Renshaw," James, the elder of them, said when he entered, "I am afraid I cannot congratulate you on your fellow-passenger. We saw him go into your cabin. He is a tremendous man. He would be magnificent if he were not so stout. Why, you will scarce find room to move!"

" 'He is a capital fellow," Wilfrid said. 'I think we shall get on splendid together. He is full of fun, and makes all sorts of jokes about his own size. He has traveled a tremendous lot, and is up to everything. He is nothing like so old as you would think, if you have not seen his face. I do not think he is above thirty-five or so. Well, as I see you have just finished, I will go up and see how we are getting on."

When Wilfrid reached the deck he found the vessel was off Erith, and was greeted by his sister.

"You silly boy, you have been missing the sight of all the shipping, and of Greenwich Hospital. The idea of stopping below all this time! I should have come to call you up if I had known which was your room."

"Cabin, you goose!" Wilfrid said; "the idea of talking of rooms on board a ship. I would have come up if I had thought of it; but I was so busy putting things to

right and making the acquaintance of the gentleman in the cabin with me that I forgot altogether we were moving down the river."

"Which is he, Wilfrid?"

Wilfrid laughed and nodded in the direction of Mr. Atherton, who was standing with his back toward them a short distance away.

Marion's eyes opened wide.

"Oh, Wil, what a big man! He must quite fill up the cabin."

"He seems an awfully good fellow, Marion."

"I dare say he may be, Wil; but he will certainly take up more than his share of the cabin."

"It is awkward, isn't it, young lady?" Mr. Atherton said, suddenly turning round on his heel, to Marion's horror, while Wilfrid flushed scarlet, for he had not the least idea that his words could be heard. "I have capital hearing, you see," Mr. Atherton went on with a laugh, "and a very useful sense it is sometimes, and has stood me in good service upon many occasions, though I own that it effectually prevents my cherishing any illusion as to my personal appearance. This is your sister, of course, Renshaw; in fact, any one could see that at a glance. There is nothing like making acquaintances early on the voyage; the first day is in that respect the most important of all."

"Why is that?" Marion asked.

"Because as a rule the order in which people sit down to table on the first day of the voyage is that in which they sit the whole time. Now, if one happens to sit one's self down by people who turn out disagreeable it is a very great nuisance, and therefore it is very important to find out a little about one's fellow-passengers the first day, so as to take a seat next to some one whom you are

not likely to quarrel with before you have been a week at sea."

"Then they do not arrange places for you, Mr. Atherton?"

"Oh, no; the captain perhaps settles as to who are to sit up by him. If there is any one of special importance a governor or vice-governor or any other big wig, he and his wife, if he has got one, will probably sit next to the captain on one side; if not, he will choose some one who has been specially introduced to him or who has sailed with him before, and the steward, before the party sit down, puts their names on their plates; everyone else shifts for themselves. Renshaw, I shall be glad if you will introduce me to your father and mother, and if we get on well I will go down below and arrange that we get places together. I have been chatting with the first officer, who is a very pleasant fellow; I have sailed with him before. The rule is he sits at the end of the table facing the captain, and my experience is that when the first officer happens to be a good fellow, which is not always the case, his end of the table is the most pleasant place. There is generally more fun and laughing at that end than there is at the other; for all the people who fancy that they are of importance make a point of getting seats as near as they can to the captain, and important people are not, as a rule, anything like as pleasant as the rest of us."

Wilfrid walked across the deck with Mr. Atherton to the point where his father and mother were sitting. "Mother, this is Mr. Atherton who is in my cabin. "Mr. Atherton shook hands with Mr. and Mrs. Renshaw.

"I asked your son to introduce me at once, Mrs. Renshaw, because, as I have been telling him, a good deal of the comfort of the voyage depends upon making a snug little party to sit together at meals. There is nothing I

dread more than being put down between two acidulated women, who make a point of showing by their manner every time one sits down that they consider one is taking up a great deal more than one's share of the seat."

Mrs. Renshaw smiled. "I should think people were not often as rude as that."

"I can assure you that it is the rule rather than the exception, Mrs Renshaw. I am not a particularly sensitive man, I think; but I make a point of avoiding crowded railway carriages, being unable to withstand the expression of blank dismay that comes over the faces of people when I present myself at the door. I have thought sometimes of hiring a little boy of about four years old to go about with me, as the two of us would then only take up a fair share of space. I have been looking to the cabin arrangements, and find that each seat holds three. Your son and daughter are neither of them bulky, so if they won't mind sitting a little close they will be conferring a genuine kindness upon me."

"We shall not mind at all," Wilfrid and Marion exclaimed together, for there was something so pleasant about Mr. Atherton's manner they felt that he would be a delightful companion.

"Very well, then; we will regard that as settled. Then we five will occupy the seats on one side of the chief officer."

"We will get the two Allens opposite," Wilfrid put in.

"I will look about for three others to make up what I may call our party. Who do you fancy, Mrs. Renshaw? Now look round and fix on somebody, and I will undertake the duty of engineering the business."

"There are two girls, sisters, in my cabin," Marion said. "I think they seem nice. They are going out alone to join their father and mother in New Zealand."

"In that case, Mrs. Renshaw, I had better leave the matter in your hands."

"That will be very simple, Mr. Atherton, as I have already spoken to them," and she at once got up and moved across to two girls of about thirteen and seventeen respectively, who were standing together watching the passing ships, and entered into conversation with them. When she proposed that, as they were in the same cabin with Marion, they should sit near each other at table, they gladly agreed, saying, however, that they had been placed under the special care of the captain, and as he had said that he would keep them under his eye, they were afraid he might want them to sit near him.

"I will speak to the captain myself," Mrs. Renshaw said. "I dare say he will be rather glad to have the responsibility taken off his hands, especially if I propose, which I will if you like, to take you under my general charge."

"Oh, we should like that very much," the elder of the two girls said. "It seems so very strange to us being here among so many people without any lady with us. We should be so much obliged to you if you would take us under your wing."

"I can quite understand your feelings, my dears, and will speak to the captain directly. I see that he is disengaged. If we were under sail there would not be much chance of getting a word with him; but as the tug has us in charge, I see that he has time to chat to the passengers."

A few minutes later the captain left the gentleman with whom he was speaking and came along the deck. The Renshaws had made his acquaintance when they first came down to see their cabins.

"How are you, Mrs. Renshaw?" he said as he came up

to her. "We have fine weather for our start, have we not? It is a great thing starting fair, as it enables people to settle down and make themselves at home."

"I have been chatting with the Miss Mitfords, captain; they are in the cabin with my daughter. They tell me that they are under your special charge."

"Yes, they are among the number of my responsibilities," the captain said, smiling.

"They naturally feel rather lonely on board from having no lady with them, and have expressed their willingness to put themselves under my charge if you will sanction it. It will be pleasant both for them and my daughter, and they can sit down with us at meals, and make a party together to work or read on deck."

"I shall be extremely glad, Mrs. Renshaw, if you will accept the responsibility. A captain's hands are full enough without having to look after women. There are four or five single ladies on board, on all of whom I have promised to keep a watchful eye, and I shall be delighted to be relieved of the responsibility of two of them."

So the matter was arranged, and going down into the cabin a few minutes before the bell rang for dinner, the party succeeded in getting the places they desired. Mr. Atherton was next to the chief officer. Wilfrid sat next to him, Marion between her brother and Mrs. Renshaw, and Mr. Renshaw next. The two Allens faced Mr. Atherton and Wilfrid; the Miss Mitfords came next, facing Marion and her mother. A Captain Pearson and his wife were next to the Mitfords, while a civil engineer, Mr. Halbrook, occupied the vacant seat next to Mr. Renshaw. Once seated, the Renshaws speedily congratulated themselves on the arrangements that they had made as they saw the hesitating way in which the rest of the passengers took their places, and the looks of inquiry and doubt

they cast at those who seated themselves next to them. For a time the meal was a silent one, friends talking together in low voices, but nothing like a general conversation being attempted. At the first officer's end of the table, however, the sound of conversation and laughter began at once.

"Have you room, Miss Renshaw? or do you already begin to regret your bargain?"

"I have plenty of room, thank you," Marion replied. "I hope that you have enough?"

"Plenty," Mr. Atherton answered. "I have just been telling your brother that if he finds I am squeezing him he must run his elbow into my ribs. Let me see, Mr. Ryan; it must be three years since we sat together."

"Just about that," the mate replied with a strong Irish accent. "You went with us from Japan to Singapore, did you not?"

"That was it, and a rough bout we had of it in that cyclone in the China Seas. You remember that I saved the ship then?"

"How was that, Mr. Atherton?" Wilfrid asked.

The first officer laughed. "Mr. Atherton always took a deal more credit to himself than we gave him. When the cyclone struck the ship and knocked her right down on her beam-ends, he happened to be sitting up to windward, and he always declared that if it hadn't been for his weight the ship would never have righted itself."

There was a general laugh at the mate's explanation.

"I always plant myself to windward in a gale," Mr. Atherton said gravely. "Shifting ballast is a most useful thing, although they have abolished it in yacht-racing. I was once in a canoe, down by Borneo, when a heavy squall struck us. I was sitting in the bottom of the boat when we saw it coming, and had just time to get up and

sit on the weather gunwale when it struck us. If it had not been for me nothing could have saved the boat from capsizing. As it was it stood up as stiff as a rock, though I own I nearly drowned them all when the blow was over, for it stopped as suddenly as it began, and the boat as nearly as possible capsized with my weight. Indeed it would have done so altogether if it hadn't heeled over so sharply that I was chucked backward into the sea. Fortunately the helmsman made a grab at me as I went past, and I managed to scramble on board again. Not that I should have sunk, for I can float like a cork; but there are a good many sharks cruising about in those waters, and it is safer inside a boat than it is out. You see, Miss Renshaw, there are advantages in being stout. I should not wonder if your brother got just my size one day. My figure was very much like his once."

"Oh, I hope not!" Marion exclaimed. "That would be dreadful! No; I don't mean that," she went on hurriedly, as Mr. Atherton's face assumed an expression of shocked surprise. "I mean that, although of course there may be many advantages in being stout, there are advantages in being thin too."

"I admit that," Mr. Atherton agreed; "but look at the disadvantages. A stout man escapes being sent trotted about on messages. Nobody would think of asking him to climb a ladder. He is not expected to dance. The thin man is squeezed into any odd corner; and is not treated with half the consideration that is given to a fat man. He worries about trifles, and has none of the quiet contentment that characterizes stout people. A stout man's food always agrees with him, or else he would not be stout, while the thin man suffers indigestion, dyspepsia, and perhaps jaundice. You see, my dear young lady, that almost all the advantages are on our side. Of

course you will say I could not climb a ladder, but then I do not want to climb a ladder. I could not make the ascent of Matterhorn; but it is much more pleasant to sit at the bottom and see fools do it. I could not very well ride a horse unless it were a dray horse; but then I have no partiality for horse exercise. Altogether I think I have every reason to be content I can travel wherever I like, see whatever I want to see, and enjoy most of the good things of life."

"And hould your own in a scrimmage," Mr. Ryan put in, laughing. "I can answer for that."

"If I am pushed to it," Mr. Atherton said modestly, "of course I try to do my best."

"Have you seen Mr. Atherton in a scrimmage?" Tom Allen asked the mate.

"I have; and a sharp one it was while it lasted."

"There is no occasion to say anything about it, Ryan," Mr. Atherton said hastily.

"But no reason in life why I should not," the mate replied. "What do you say, ladies and gentlemen?"

There was a chorus of "Go on, please, do let us hear about it," and he continued:

"I don't give Mr. Atherton the credit of saving our ship in the squall; but it would have gone badly with us if he hadn't taken part in the row we had. You see, we had a mixed crew on board, for the most part Chinamen and a few Lascars; for we were three years in the China Seas, and English sailors cannot well stand the heat out there, and besides don't like remaining in ships stopping there trading. So when, after we arrived at Shanghai, we got orders to stop and trade out there, most of them took their discharge, and we filled up with natives. Coming down from Japan that voyage there was a row. I forget what their pretext was now, but I have no doubt

it was an arranged thing, and that they intended to take the ship and run her ashore on some of the islands, take what they fancied out of her, and make off in boats, or perhaps take her into one of those nests of pirates that abound among the islands.

"They felt so certain of overpowering us, for there were only the three officers, the boatswain, and two cabin passengers, that instead of rising by night, when they would no doubt have succeeded, they broke into mutiny at dinner-time—came aft in a body, clamoring that their food was unfit to eat. Then suddenly drawing weapons from beneath their clothes they rushed up the gangway on to the poop; and as none of us were armed, and had no idea of what was going to take place, they would have cut us down almost without resistance had it not been for our friend here. He was standing just at the top of the poop ladder when they came up, headed by their seraing. Mr. Atherton knocked the scoundrel down with a blow of his fist, and then, catching him by the ankles, whirled him round his head like a club and knocked the fellows down like ninepins as they swarmed up the gangway, armed with knives and creases.

"The captain, who was down below, had slammed and fastened the door opening on to the waist on seeing the fellows coming aft, and handed up to us through the skylight some loaded muskets, and managed, by standing on the table and taking our hands, to get up himself. Then we opened fire upon them, and in a very few minutes drove them down. We shot six of them. The seraing of course was killed, four of the others had their skulls fairly broken in by the blows that they had received, and five were knocked senseless. We chucked them down the hatchway to the others, had up four or five of the men to work the ship, and kept the rest fastened

below until we got to Singapore and handed them over to the authorities. They all got long terms of penal servitude. Anyhow, Mr. Atherton saved our lives and the ship, so I think you will agree with me that he can hold his own in a scrimmage."

"It was very hot work," Mr. Atherton said with a laugh, "and I did not get cool again for two or three days afterward. The idea of using a man as a club was not my own. Belzoni put down a riot among his Arab laborers, when he was excavating ruins somewhere out in Syria, I think it was, by knocking the ringleader down and using him as a club. I had been reading the book not long before, and it flashed across my mind as the seraing went down that he might be utilized. Fists are all very well, but when you have got fellows to deal with armed with knives and other cutting instruments it is better to keep them at a distance if you can."

"That was splendid!" Wilfrid exclaimed. "How I should like to have seen it!"

"It was good for the eyes," the mate said; "and bate Donnybrook entirely. Such a yelling and shouting as the yellow reptiles made you never heard."

By this time the meal was finished, and the passengers repaired on deck to find that the ship was just passing Sheerness.

"Who would have thought," Wilfrid said to his sister as he looked at Mr. Atherton, who had taken his seat in a great Indian reclining chair he had brought for his own use, and was placidly smoking a cigar, "that that easy, placid, pleasant-looking man could be capable of such a thing as that! Shouldn't I like to have been there!"

"So should I," Marion agreed; "though it must have been terrible to look at. He doesn't look as if anything would put him out. I expect Samson was something

like him, only not so stout. He seems to have been very good-tempered except when people wanted to capture him; and was always ready to forgive that horrid woman who tried to betray him to his enemies. Well, everything is very nice—much nicer than I expected—and I feel sure that we shall enjoy the voyage very much."

CHAPTER III.

THE VOYAGE.

In addition to those already named, the Flying Scud carried some twenty other cabin passengers. She took no emigrants forward, as she was full of cargo, and was not, moreover, going direct to New Zealand. There were therefore only three or four young men in addition to the Grimstones forward. The fine weather that had favored the start accompanied them down the channel and across the bay. Life went on quietly on board. It was early in May when they started; and the evenings were still too chilly to permit of any sojourn on deck after sunset. Each day, however, the weather grew warmer, and by the time the vessel was off the coast of Portugal the evenings were warm and balmy.

"This is not at all what I expected," Marion Renshaw said, as she sat in a deck-chair, to Mr. Atherton, who was leaning against the bulwark smoking a cigar. "I thought we were going to have storms, and that every one was going to be seasick. That is what it is like in all the books I have read; and I am sure that I have not felt the least bit ill from the time we started."

"You have had everything in your favor. There has been just enough breeze to take us along at a fair rate with all our light canvas set, and yet not enough to cause more than a ripple on the sea. The ship has been as steady as if in port; but you must not flatter yourself this is going to last all the time. I think we shall have

a change before long. The glass has fallen a little, and the wind has shifted its quarter two or three times during the day. The sky, too, does not look so settled as it has done. I think we shall have a blow before long."

"What! A storm, Mr. Atherton?"

"No, I don't say that; but wind enough to get up a bit of sea, and to make landsmen feel very uncomfortable."

"But I suppose we should not be ill now even if it were rough, after being a week at sea?"

"I do not think you would be likely to be ill so long as you might have been had you encountered a gale directly we got out of the river, but I think that if it comes on rough all those addicted to seasickness are likely to suffer more or less. Some people are ill every time rough weather comes along, however long the voyage. I suppose you don't know yet whether you are a good sailor or not?"

Marion shook her head. "We have been at the seaside almost every year, but we have never gone out in boats much there. Papa was always too busy to go, and I don't think he likes it. Mother gets a bad headache, even if she isn't ill. So I very seldom went out, and never when it was the least rough."

Mr. Atherton's predictions turned out well founded. The wind got up during the night and was blowing freshly in the morning, and only two or three of the lady passengers made their appearance at breakfast; and several of the gentlemen were also absent. Wilfrid, to his great satisfaction, felt so far no symptoms whatever of impending illness. The two Allens were obliged to keep on deck during the meal, being unable to stand the motion below; but they were well enough to enjoy the cup of tea and plate of cold meat Wilfrid carried up to

them. An hour or two later they went below. The wind was rising and the sea hourly getting up. Marion came up after breakfast, and for some time afterward walked up and down on the deck with Wilfrid, enjoying the brisk air, and considering it great fun to try to walk straight up and down the swaying deck. Presently, however, her laugh became subdued and her cheeks lost their color.

"'I am afraid I am going to be ill, Wilfrid; but I shall stay on deck if I can. Both the Mitfords are ill, I am sure, for neither of them got up, though they declared that they felt nothing the matter with them. I have made up my mind to stay on deck as long as I possibly can."

"That is the best way," Mr. Atherton said as he joined them in their walk, and caught the last sentence. "There is nothing like keeping up as long as possible; because if you do so it will sometimes pass off after a short time, whereas if you give up and take to your berth it is sure to run its course, which is longer or shorter according to circumstances—sometimes two days and sometimes five; but I should say that people who are what you may call fair sailors generally get over it in two days, unless the weather is very bad. So fight against it as long as you can, and when you cannot bear it any longer I will wrap you up in rugs, and you shall have my great chair to curl up in close by the lee bulwark. But determination goes a long way, and you may get over it yet. You take my arm, you won't throw me off my balance; while if the vessel gives a sharper roll than usual, you and your brother may both lose your feet together."

As soon as they started on their walk Mr. Atherton began an amusing story of some adventure of his in the

Western States of America, and Marion was so interested that she forgot all about her uncomfortable sensation, and was astonished when on hearing the lunch-bell ring she discovered she was getting perfectly well.

"Where is Wilfrid?" she asked.

"There he is, leaning over the lee bulwark; the fiend of seasickness has him in its grip."

"Only think of Wilfrid being unwell and me being all right! You have quite driven it away, Mr. Atherton, for I was feeling very poorly when I began to walk with you."

"I will go down and get you some luncheon and bring it up here to you. Curl yourself up in my chair until I return, and do not think more about the motion than you can help. You had better not go near your brother —people who are ill hate being pitied."

An hour later Wilfrid went below. In the evening, however, the wind dropped considerably, and the next morning the sea was sparkling in the sunlight, and the Flying Scud was making her way along with a scarcely perceptible motion. Thenceforth the weather was delightful throughout the voyage to Rio. The passengers found upon closer acquaintance that they all got on well together, and the days passed away pleasantly. In the evenings the piano was brought up from the cabin on to the deck, and for two or three hours there was singing, varied by an occasional dance among the young people.

From the day of their leaving England Mr. Atherton had been the leading spirit on board the ship. If a misunderstanding arose he acted as mediator. He was ever ready to propose pastimes and amusements to lighten the monotony of the voyage, took the leading part in the concerts held on deck when the evenings were calm and clear, and was full of resource and invention. With the

four or five children on board he was a prime favorite, and Mr. Renshaw often wondered at the patience and good temper with which he submitted to all their whims, and was ready to give up whatever he was doing to submit himself to their orders. He had, before they had been ten days at sea, talked over with Mr. Renshaw the latter's plans, and advised him upon no account to be in a hurry to snap up the first land offered to him.

"Half the people who come out to the colonies," he said, "get heavily bit at first by listening to the land agents, and allowing themselves to be persuaded into buying property which, when they come to take possession of it, is in a majority of the cases almost worthless. I should advise you when you get there to hire a house in Wellington, where you can leave your wife and daughter while you examine the various districts and see which offer the greatest advantages. If you do not feel equal to it yourself, let your son go in your place. He is, I think, a sharp young fellow, and not likely to be easily taken in. At any rate, when he has made his report as to the places that seem most suitable, you can go and see their relative advantages before purchasing.

"There is no greater mistake than buying land in a locality of which you know nothing. You may find that the roads are impracticable, and that you have no means of getting your produce to market, and after awhile you will be glad to sell your place for a mere song, and shift to another, which you might at first have obtained at a price much lower than you gave for your worthless farm. I have knocked about in the States a good deal, and have known scores of men ruined by being too hasty in making a choice. You want to be in a colony six months at least before investing your money in land, so as to know something of the capabilities and advantages of each

district. To a young man I should say—travel about in the colony, working your way, and making a stay of a month here and a month there. Of course in your case this is out of the question; but a personal examination of the places offered to you, which in nine cases out of ten men are ready to sell for less than they have cost them, will insure you against absolute swindling."

"What are you going to do yourself, Mr. Atherton?"

"I have come out simply to study the botany of the island. I may stay in the colony for a month or for a year. At any rate, if you depute Wilfrid to travel about to examine the various districts where land can be bought, I shall be glad to accompany him, as I myself shall also be on the lookout."

"You are not thinking of farming, Mr. Atherton?"

"No. My own idea is to take a bit of land on one of the rivers, to get up a hut to serve as my headquarters, and to spend much of my time in traveling about. I am very fortunately placed. I have ample funds to enable me to live in comfort, and I am free to indulge my fancy for wandering as I please. I consider that I have been spoiled by being my own master too young. I think it is bad for a young man to start in life with a competence; but when it comes to one in middle age, when one has learned to spend it rationally, it is undoubtedly a very great comfort and advantage. I suppose, however, that the time will come when I shall settle down. I am thirty-five, and I ought to 'range myself,' as the French say."

Mr. Atherton had not been long upon the voyage when he discovered that the chances of success of the Renshaw party as settlers would be small indeed if they depended upon the exertions of the head of the family. He had not been more than a day or two on board before Mr.

Renshaw began to discuss his favorite hobby with him, and confided to him that he intended thoroughly to investigate the history, customs, and religion of the Maoris, and to produce an exhaustive work on the subject. "An excellent idea, very," the stout man said encouragingly, "but one demanding great time and investigation; and perhaps," he added doubtfully, "one more suited to a single man, who can go and live among the natives and speak their language, than for a married man with a family to look after."

Mr. Renshaw waved the remark aside lightly. "I shall, of course, set to work immediately I arrive to acquire a thorough knowledge of the language, and indeed have already begun with a small dictionary and a New Testament in the Maori language, brought out by the Missionary Society. As to my family, my exertions in the farming way will be of no use whatever to them. My wife and daughter will look after the house, and Wilfrid will undertake the management of the men out of doors. The whole scheme is theirs, and I should be of no assistance to them whatever. My bent lies entirely in the direction of archaeology, and there can be little doubt that my thorough acquaintance with all relating to the habits, and, so far as is known, of the language of the ancient Britons, Saxons, Danes and the natives of the northern part of the island, will be of inestimable advantage in enabling me to carry out the subject I have resolved to take up. There are analogies and similarities between the habits of all primitive peoples, and one accustomed to the study of the early races of Europe can from a general opinion of the habits and mode of living of a tribe merely from the inspection of an ancient weapon or two, a bracelet, and a potsherd."

Mr. Atherton looked down upon his companion with

half-closed eyes, and seemed to be summing him up mentally; after a short conversation he turned away, and as he filled his pipe muttered to himself: "It is well for the family that the mother seems a capable and sensible woman, and that the lad, unless I am mistaken, has a dogged resolution about him as well as spirit and courage. The girl, too, is a bright, sensible lass, and they may get on in spite of this idiot of a father. However, the man shows that he possesses a certain amount of sense by the confidence with which he throws the burden of the whole business of providing a living for the family on their shoulders.

"Of course they would be much better without him, for I can foresee he will give them an awful lot of trouble. He will go mooning away among the natives, and will be getting lost and not heard of for a tremendous time. Still, I don't know that he will come to much harm. The Maoris have fine traits of character, and though they have been fighting about what they call the king question, they have seldom been guilty of any acts of hostility to isolated settlers, and a single white man going among them has always been received hospitably; beside, they will probably think him mad, and savages have always a sort of respect for madmen. Still, he will be a terrible worry to his family. I have taken a fancy to the others, and if I can do them a good turn out there in any way I will."

As the voyage went on Mr. Atherton's liking for Mrs. Renshaw, her son and daughter, increased greatly, while his contempt for Mr. Renshaw became modified as he came to know him better. He found that he was really a capable man in his own particular hobby, and that although weak and indecisive he was very kind and affectionate with his wife and children, and reposed an almost childlike confidence in his wife's good sense.

Madeira had been sighted, lying like a great cloud on the horizon, and indeed the young Renshaws had difficulty when they came up on deck in the morning in believing that it was really land they saw. No stay was made here, nor did they catch a glimpse of the Canary Islands, being too far to the west to see even the lofty peak of Teneriffe. The first time the ship dropped anchor was at St. Jago, one of the Cape de Verde Islands; here they took in a supply of fresh water, meat, and vegetables. The passengers all landed, but were much disappointed with the sandy and uninteresting island, and it was no consolation for them to learn from the captain that parts of the island were much more fertile, although the vegetables and fruit came for the most part from the other islands. "Now," he said, "if all goes well you will see no land again till you get to Rio. We shall keep to the east of St. Paul, and unless we get blown out of our course we shall not go near Ascension."

As the wind continued favorable the ship kept her course, and at twelve o'clock one day the captain, after taking his observations, told them that he expected to be in Rio on the following evening. The next morning when they came up on deck land was in sight, and in the evening they dropped anchor in the harbor of Rio, one of the finest ports in the world.

"Yes, it is a splendid harbor," Mr. Atherton agreed, as he listened to the exclamations of delight of the Renshaws. "I do not know that it is the finest, but it is certainly equal to any I have ever seen. As a harbor New York is better, because even more landlocked. San Francisco is, both in that respect and in point of scenery, superb. Bombay is a grand harbor, but exposed to certain winds. Taken altogether, I think I should give the palm to San Francisco."

A few minutes after the anchor had dropped a number of shore boats came alongside, filled with luscious fruit, and rowed for the most part by negroes, who chatted and shouted and gesticulated, making such a din that it was impossible to distinguish a single word amid the uproar. Wilfrid, the Allens, and others quickly ran down the ladders, and without troubling themselves to bargain returned with quantities of fruit. Several negresses soon followed them on to the deck, and going up to the ladies produced cards and letters testifying that they were good washerwomen and their terms reasonable. The captain had the evening before told them it would take him three or four days to discharge his cargo for Rio, and that they had better take advantage of the opportunity if they wanted any washing done. They had, therefore, got everything in readiness, and in a few minutes numerous canvas bags filled with linen were deposited in the boats.

In addition to the fruit several great bouquets of gorgeous flowers had been purchased, and the cabin that evening presented quite a festive appearance. After it became dark and the lights of Rio sparkled out, all agreed that the scene was even more beautiful than by daylight. The air was deliciously balmy and soft, the sea as smooth as glass. The moon was nearly full, and the whole line of the shore could be distinctly seen. Boats flitted about between the vessels and the strand; fishing-boats, with their sails hanging motionless, slowly made their way in by the aid of oars. The sounds of distant music in the city came across the water.

There was no singing or dancing on board the Flying Scud that evening. All were content to sit quiet and enjoy the scene, and such conversation as there was was carried on in low tones, as if they were under a spell which they feared to break. The next morning all went

ashore soon after breakfast; but upon their assembling at dinner it was found that the general impression was one of disappointment. It was a fine city, but not so fine as it looked from the water. Except the main thoroughfares the streets were narrow, and, as the ladies declared, dirty. The young people, however, were not so critical; they had been delighted with the stir and movement, the bright costumes, the variety of race and color, and the novelty of everything they saw.

"The negroes amuse me most," Marion said. "They seem to be always laughing. I never saw such merry people."

"They are like children," her father said. "The slightest thing causes them amusement. It is one of the signs of a low type of intellect when people are given to laugh at trifles."

"Then the natives ought to be very intelligent," Marion said, "for as a whole they appeared to me to be a serious race. Of course I saw many of them laughing and chattering, but most of them are very quiet in manner. The old people seem to be wrinkled in a wonderful way. I never saw English people so wrinkled."

"All southern races show age in that way," Mr. Atherton said. "You see marvelous old men and women in Spain and Italy. People who, as far as looks go, might be a hundred and fifty—little dried-up specimens of humanity, with faces more like those of monkeys than men."

"Are the negroes slaves, Mr. Atherton? They still have slavery in Brazil, do they not? They certainly are not at all according to my idea of slaves."

"The estates are mostly worked by negro slaves," Mr. Atherton said, "and no doubt many of those you saw to-day are also slaves. Household slavery is seldom

severe, and I believe the Brazilians are generally kind masters. But probably the greater portion of the negroes you saw are free. They may have purchased their freedom with their savings, or may have been freed by kind masters. It is no very unusual thing for a Brazilian at his death to leave a will giving freedom to all his slaves. Government is doing its best to bring about the entire extinction of slavery. I believe that all children born after a certain date have been declared free, and have no doubt that in time slavery will be abolished. Great changes like this take some time to carry out, and even for the sake of the slaves themselves it is better to proceed quietly and gradually. I suppose nobody inclines to go on shore again to-night?"

There was a general negative. The day had been very warm, and having been walking about for hours, no one felt any inclination to make a fresh start. The following morning the vessel began to unload her cargo. Some of the older passengers declared that they had had enough of shore, and should not land—at any rate until the afternoon. The rest went ashore; but the greater part of them returned at lunch time, and the heat in the afternoon was so great that none cared to land again.

In the evening the two Allens and Wilfrid agreed to go ashore to visit a theater. Mr. Atherton said that as he had no inclination to melt away all at once he would not join them, but would land with them and stroll about for a time, and see the town in its evening aspect. Several other parties were made up among the male passengers, and one or two of the ladies accompanied their husbands.

Wilfrid and the Allens did not stay out the performance. The heat was very great, and as they did not understand a word of the dialogue they soon agreed that

it would be more pleasant to stroll about, or to sit down in the open air before a *café* and sip iced drinks.

Accordingly, after walking about for awhile they sat down before a *café* in the Grand Square, and as they sipped iced lemonade looked on with much amusement at the throng walking up and down.

"It is later than I thought," James Allen said, looking at his watch. "It is nearly twelve o'clock, and high time for us to be on board."

They started to make what they thought would prove a short cut down to the landing place; but as usual the short cut proved delusive, and they soon found themselves wandering in unknown streets. They asked several persons they met the way down to the water, but none of them understood English, and it was a considerable time before they emerged from the streets on to the line of quays.

"We are ever so much too far to the right," James Allen said as they looked round. "I fancy that is the ship's light not far from the shore half a mile away on the left. I hope we shall find some boatmen to take us off; it would be rather awkward finding ourselves here for the night in a place where no one understands the language."

"I think we should manage all right," Wilfrid said. "We know the way from the place where we landed up into the part where the hotels are, and are sure to find people there who understand English. Still I hope it will not come to that. They would be in a great fidget on board if we were not to turn up to-night."

"I do not think they would be alarmed," James Allen replied. "Every one is in bed and asleep long ago, and we should be on board in the morning before the steward went to our cabin and found that we were missing. I

consider we are quite safe in that respect, but Atherton might be doing something if he found we did not come back."

"He might do something, perhaps," Wilfrid said; "but I am quite sure he would not alarm my father and mother about it. He is the last sort of fellow to do that."

CHAPTER IV.

A ROW ON SHORE.

While Wilfrid and the Allens were talking they were walking briskly in the direction of their landing-place. They had arrived within a hundred yards of it when a party of four men who were lying among a pile of timber got up and came across toward them. They were rough-looking fellows, and James Allen said, "I do not like the look of these chaps. I think they mean mischief. Look out!" As he spoke the men rushed at them. James Allen gave a loud shout for help, and then struck a blow at a man who rushed at him. The fellow staggered backward, and with a fierce exclamation in Portuguese drew a knife. A moment later Allen received a sharp stab on the shoulder, and was knocked to the ground. The other two after a short struggle had also been overpowered and borne down, but in their case the robbers had not used their knives.

They were feeling in their pockets when the step of a man approaching at full speed was heard. One of the robbers was about to run off, when another exclaimed: "You coward! It is but one man, which means more booty. Out with your knives and give him a taste of them as he comes up!" A moment later the man ran up. The leader stepped forward to meet him, knife in hand; but as he struck his wrist was grasped, and a tremendous

blow was delivered in his face, hurling him stunned and bleeding to the ground. With a bound the newcomer threw himself upon two of the other men. Grasping them by their throats he shook them as if they had been children, and then dashed their heads together with such tremendous force that when he loosened his grasp both fell insensible on the ground. The other robber took to his heels at the top of his speed. All this had passed so quickly that the struggle was over before Wilfrid and the Allens could get to their feet.

"Not hurt, I hope?" their rescuer asked anxiously.

"Why, Mr. Atherton, is it you?" Wilfrid exclaimed. "You arrived at a lucky moment indeed. No, I am not hurt that I know of, beyond a shake."

"Nor I," Bob Allen said.

"I have got a stab in my shoulder," James Allen answered. "I don't know that it is very deep, but I think it is bleeding a good deal, for I feel very shaky. That fellow has got my watch," and he pointed to the man who had been first knocked down.

"Look in his hand, Wilfrid. He won't have had time to put it in his pocket. If you have lost anything else look in the other fellows' hands or on the ground close to them."

He lifted James Allen, who was now scarcely able to stand, carried him to the wood pile, and seated him on a log with his back against another. Then he took off his coat and waistcoat and tore open his shirt. "It is nothing serious," he said. "It is a nasty gash and is bleeding freely, but I dare say we can stop that; I have bandaged up plenty of worse wounds in my time." He drew the edge of the wound together, and tied his handkerchief and that of Wilfrid tightly round it. "That will do for the present," he said. "Now I will carry you down to

the boat," and lifting the young fellow up as though he were a feather he started with him.

"Shall we do anything with these fellows, Mr. Atherton?" Wilfrid asked.

"No, leave them as they are; what they deserve is to be thrown into the sea. I dare say their friend will come back to look after them presently."

In a couple of minutes they arrived at the landing-place, where two men were sitting in a boat.

"But how did you come to be here, Mr. Atherton?" Wilfrid asked when they had taken their seats.

"I came to look after you boys, Wilfrid. I got on board about eleven, and on going down to the cabin found you had not returned, so I thought I would smoke another cigar and wait up for you. At twelve o'clock the last party returned, and as I thought you might have some difficulty in getting on board after that, I got into the boat and rowed ashore, and engaged the men to wait as long as I wanted them. I thought perhaps you had missed your way, and did not feel uneasy about you, for there being three of you together it was scarcely likely you had got into any bad scrape. I was beginning at last to think you had perhaps gone to an hotel for the night, and that it was no use waiting any longer, when I heard your voices coming along the quays. The night is so quiet that I heard your laugh some distance away, and recognized it. I then strolled along to meet you, when I saw those four fellows come out into the moonlight from a shadow in the wood. I guessed that they were up to mischief, and started to run at once, and was within fifty yards of you when I saw the scuffle and caught the glint of the moon on the blade of a knife. Another five or six seconds I was up, and then there was an end of it. Now we are close to the ship. Go up as

quietly as you can, and do not make a noise as you go into your cabins. It is no use alarming people. I will carry Jim down."

"I can walk now, I think, Mr. Atherton."

"You might do so, but you won't, my lad; for if you did you would probably start your wound bleeding afresh. You two had best take your shoes off directly you get on deck."

James Allen was carried down and laid on his berth. Mr. Atherton went and roused the ship's doctor, and then lighted the lamp in the cabin.

"What is all this about?" the surgeon asked as he came in.

"There has been a bit of a scrimmage on shore," Mr. Atherton replied; "and, as you see, Allen has got a deepish slash from the shoulder down to the elbow. It has been bleeding very freely, and he is faint from loss of blood; but I do not think it is serious at all."

"No, it is a deep flesh wound," the doctor said, examining him; "but there is nothing to be in the slightest degree uneasy about. I will get a bandage from my cabin, and some lint, and set it all right in five minutes."

When the arm was bandaged Mr Atherton said: "Now I must get you to do a little plastering for me, doctor."

"What ! are you wounded, Mr. Atherton?" the others exclaimed in surprise.

"Nothing to speak of, lads; but both those fellows made a slash at me as I closed with them. I had but just finished their leader, and could do no more than strike wildly as I turned upon them." As he spoke he was taking off his waistcoat and shirt.

"By Jove, you have had a narrow escape!" the doctor said; "and how you take it so coolly I cannot make out.

Except as to the bleeding, they are both far more serious than Allen's."

One of the wounds was in the left side, about three inches below the arm. The man had evidently struck at the heart, but the quickness with which Mr. Atherton had closed with him had disconcerted his aim; the knife had struck rather far back, and glancing behind the ribs had cut a deep gash under the shoulder-blade. The other wound had been given by a downright blow at the right side, and had laid open the flesh from below the breast down to the hip.

"It is only a case for plaster," Mr. Atherton said. "It is useful to have a casing of fat sometimes. It is the same thing with a whale—you have got to drive a harpoon in very deep to get at the vitals. You see this wound in front has bled very little."

"You have lost a good deal of blood from the other cut," the surgeon said. "I will draw the edges of the wounds together with a needle and thread, and will then put some bandages on. You will have to keep quiet for some days. Your wounds are much too serious to think of putting plaster on at present."

"I have had a good deal more serious wounds than these," Mr. Atherton said cheerfully, "and have had to ride seventy or eighty miles on the following day. However, I will promise you not to go ashore to-morrow; and as the captain says he expects to be off the next morning, I shall be able to submit myself to your orders without any great privation."

"Why did you not say that you were wounded, Mr. Atherton?" Wilfrid said reproachfully as they went to their own cabin and prepared to turn in.

"To tell you the truth, Wilfrid, I hardly thought the wounds were as deep as they are. My blood was up, you

see, and when that is the case you are scarcely conscious of pain. I felt a sharp shooting sensation on both sides as I grasped those fellows by the throat, and afterward I knew I was bleeding a bit at the back, for I felt the warmth of the blood down in my shoe; but there was nothing to prevent my carrying young Allen, and one person can carry a wounded man with much more ease to him than two can do, unless of course they have got a stretcher."

The next morning there was quite a stir in the ship when it was known that two of the passengers were wounded, and Mr. and Mrs. Renshaw were greatly alarmed when they heard of the risk Wilfrid had run. Neither of the wounded men appeared at breakfast, as the surgeon insisted that both should lie quiet for at least one day. Mr. Rensahw had paid a visit to Mr. Atherton directly he had heard from Wilfrid his story of the fray, and thanked him most warmly for his intervention on behalf of his son. "Wilfrid said he has very little doubt that they all three would have been stabbed if you had not come up."

"I do not say they might not," Mr. Atherton said, "because their resistance had raised the men's anger; and in this country when a man is angry he generally uses his knife. Besides, dead men raise no alarm. Still they might have contented themselves with robbing them. However, I own that it was lucky I was on the spot."

"But it was not a question of luck at all," Mr. Renshaw insisted. "You were there because you had specially gone ashore to look after these foolish young fellows, and your being there was the result of your own thoughtfulness for them, and not in any way of chance."

"There is quite a crowd on the quay, Mr. Renshaw,"

the captain said when that gentleman went on deck. "I suppose they have found stains of blood in the road, and conclude that a crime has been committed. Oh, here is our boat putting out from the landing-place. The steward has been on shore to get fresh fruit for breakfast; he will tell us what is going on."

The steward had gone ashore before the news of the encounter had been spread by the surgeon.

"What is the excitement about on shore?" the captain asked him as he stepped on deck.

"Well, sir, as far as I could learn from a chap who spoke a little English, there have been bad doings on shore in the night. Two men were found this morning lying dead there. There is nothing uncommon about that; but they say there are no wounds on them except that their skulls are stove in, as if they had both been struck by a beam of wood at the back of the head. But besides that there were two or three pools of blood in the road. It seems one man walked back into the town, for there are marks of his feet as if he stepped in the blood before starting in that direction. Then there is a line of blood spots down to the landing-place and down the steps, as if somebody had got into a boat. Nobody seems to make head or tail of the business."

"Well, we must keep this quiet if we can," the captain said, turning to Mr. Renshaw. "If it were known that any of our people were concerned in this affair they might keep us here for three weeks or a month while it is being investigated, or insist upon Mr. Atherton and your son and the Allens remaining behind as witnesses. Mr. Ryan," he called to the first mate, "just come here a moment. This matter is more serious than we thought. It seems that Mr. Atherton, who, as we have heard, dashed the heads of two of these fellows together, killed them on the spot."

"Sure and I thought as much when young Allen was telling me about it," the mate said. "I have seen Mr. Atherton at work before this, and I thought to myself that unless those fellows' skulls were made of iron, and thick at that, they must have gone in when he brought them together."

"The worst of it is," the captain went on, "they have traced marks of blood down to the landing-stage, and of course have suspicion that some one concerned in the affair took a boat, and either came off to one of the ships or went away in one of the fishing craft. You know what these fellows are; if they find out that any one on board is mixed up in the matter they will keep the ship here for a month."

"That is true enough, sir. It is mighty lucky we would be if we got away in a month."

"The first thing is to see about the boatmen," the captain said. "Of course if they tell the authorities they brought a wounded man on board here late last night there is an end of it; but if they hold their tongues, and we all keep our own counsel, the thing may not leak out to-day, and we will have our anchor up and get out this evening if we can. You had better tell all the crew that not a word is to be said about the matter, and I will impress the same on the passengers. When they know that a careless word may lead to a month's detention, you may be sure there will be no talking. But before you speak to them I will go down and see Mr. Atherton, and hear what he says about the boatmen." He returned in two or three minutes. "I hope it will be all right," he said. "Atherton gave them a pound apiece, and told them to hold their tongues. He thinks it is probable they will do so, for they would know well enough that they would, as likely as not, be clapped into prison and

kept there while the investigation was going on. So there is a strong hope that it may not leak out through them. You must stop all leave ashore, Mr. Ryan. Tell the men whose turn it is to go they shall have their spree at Buenos Ayres. If they were to get drunk, it would be as likely as not to slip out."

"I will see to it, sir."

Directly breakfast was over the captain took a boat and went ashore. He had duly impressed upon all the passengers the absolute necessity for silence, and several of these went ashore with him. He returned half an hour later, having been up to the British Consulate.

"The affair is making quite a stir in the town. Not on account of two men being found dead, there is nothing uncommon in that, especially as they have been recognized as two notorious ruffians; but the whole circumstances of the affair puzzle them.

"The doctors who have examined the bodies have arrived pretty well at the truth, and say that both men have been gripped by the throat, for the marks of the fingers are plainly visible, and their heads dashed together. But although this is, as we know, perfectly true, no one believes it; for the doctors themselves admit that it does not appear to them possible that any man would have had the strength requisite to completely batter in the skulls of two others, as has been done in this case. The police are searching the town for the man whose footsteps led in that direction, and as they know all the haunts of these ruffians and their associates it is likely enough that they will find him, especially as his face is sure to bear marks of Atherton's handiwork. Still, if they do find him, and he tells all he knows of the business, they will not be much nearer to tracing the actors in it to this ship. It is not probable that he recovered his

senses until long after they were on board the boat, and can only say that while engaged in attempting to rob some passers-by he was suddenly knocked down. But even this they are not likely to get out of him first, for he will know that he used a knife, and is not likely to put himself in the way of punishment if he can help it. I came off at once, because I heard at the consulate that the police are going to search every ship in the harbor to see if they can find some wounded man, or get some clew to the mystery, so I must ask the doctor if his two patients are fit to be dressed and go up on deck."

The doctor on being consulted said that he should certainly have preferred that they should have remained quiet all day, but he did not know that it would do them any harm to get on deck for a bit. And accordingly in half an hour Mr. Atherton and James Allen came up. The doctor, who had assisted them to dress, accompanied them.

"Now, Mr. Atherton, you had better seat yourself in that great deck chair of yours with the leg rest. If you sit there quietly reading when they come on board they are not likely to suspect you of being a desperate character, or to appreciate your inches and width of shoulder. Allen had better sit quiet till they get alongside, and then slip that sling into his pocket and walk up and down talking to one of the ladies, with his thumb in his waistcoat so as to support his arm. He looks pale and shaky; but they are not accustomed to much color here, and he will pass well enough."

As soon as Mr. Atherton had taken his seat Mrs. Renshaw and Marion came up to him. "How can we thank you enough, Mr. Atherton, for the risks you have run to succor Wilfrid, and for your kind consideration in going on shore to wait for him?"

"It was nothing, Mrs. Renshaw. I own to enjoying a scrimmage when I can go into one with the feeling of being in the right. You know that I am a very lazy man, but it is just your lazy men who do enjoy exerting themselves occasionally."

"It was grand!" Marion broke in; "and you ought not to talk as if it was nothing, Mr. Atherton. Wilfrid said that he thought it was all over with him till he saw a big man flying down the road."

"A perfect colossus of Rhodes!" Mr. Atherton laughed.

"It is not a thing to joke about," Marion went on earnestly. "It may seem very little to you, Mr. Atherton, but it is everything to us."

"Don't you know that one always jokes when one is serious, Miss Renshaw? You know that in church any little thing that you would scarcely notice at any other time makes you inclined to laugh. Some day in the far distance, when you become a woman, you will know the truth of the saying, that smiles and tears are very close to each other."

"I am getting to be a woman now," Marion said with some dignity; for Mr. Atherton always persisted in treating her as if she were a child, which, as she was nearly seventeen, was a standing grievance to her.

"Age does not make a woman, Miss Renshaw. I saw you skipping three days ago with little Kate Mitford and your brother and young Allen, and you enjoyed it as much as any of them."

"We were trying which could keep up the longest," Marion said; "Wilfred and I against the other two. You were looking on, and I believe you would have liked to have skipped too."

"I think I should," Mr. Atherton agreed. "You young people do not skip half as well as we used to when

I was a boy; and I should have given you a lesson if I had not been afraid of shaking the ship's timbers to pieces."

"How absurd you are, Mr. Atherton!" Marion said pettishly. "Of course you are not thin, but you always talk of yourself as if you were something monstrous."

Mr. Atherton laughed. His diversion had had the desired effect, and had led them away from the subject of the fight on shore.

"There is a galley putting off from shore with a lot of officials on board," the captain said, coming up at this moment. "They are rowing to the next ship, and I suppose they will visit us next."

A quarter of an hour later the galley came alongside, and three officials mounted the gangway. The captain went forward to meet them. "Is there anything I can do for you, gentlemen?"

"There has been a crime committed on shore," the leader of the party said, "and it is suspected that some of those concerned in the matter are on board one of the ships in the harbor. I have authority to make a strict search on board each."

"You are perfectly welcome to do so, sir," the captain said. "One of our officers will show you over the ship."

"I must trouble you to show me your list of passengers and crew, and to muster the men on deck. But first I must ask you, Did any of your boats return on board late?"

"No," the captain replied. "Our last boat was hauled up to the davits at half-past nine. There was a heavy day's work before the men to-day, and I therefore refused leave on shore."

The men were ordered to be mustered, and while they were collecting the second mate went round the ship

with the officials, and they saw that no one was below in his berth. The men's names were called over from the list, and the officials satisfied that all were present and in good health.

"Now for the passengers," he said.

"I cannot ask them to muster," the captain observed, "but I will walk round with you and point out those on the list. There are some eight or ten on shore. They will doubtless be off to lunch; and if you leave an officer on board he will see that they are by no means the sort of people to take part in such an affair as that which has happened on shore."

The officials went round the deck, but saw nothing whatever to excite their suspicion. Marion Renshaw was laughing and talking with Mr. Atherton, Miss Mitford walking up and down the poop in conversation with James Allen. After they had finished their investigations, the officials left one of their party to inspect the remaining passengers as they came on board, and to check them off the list. They then again took their seats in the galley and were rowed to the next ship.

By dint of great exertions the cargo was got out by sunset, the sails were at once loosened and the anchor weighed, and before the short twilight had faded away the Flying Scud was making her way with a gentle breeze toward the mouth of the harbor.

"We are well out of that," Mr. Atherton said as he looked back at the lights of the city.

"I think you are very well out of it indeed, in more senses than one," said the surgeon, who was standing next to him; "but you have had a wonderfully close shave of it, Mr. Atherton. Another inch and either of those blows might have been fatal. Besides, had you been detained for a month or six weeks, it is as likely as

not that, what with the heat and what with the annoyance, your wound would have taken a bad turn. Now, you must let me exercise my authority and order you to your berth immediately. You ought not to have been out of it. Of the two evils, getting up and detention, I chose the least; but I should be glad now if you would go off at once. If you do not, I can assure you I may have you on my hands all the rest of the voyage."

"I will obey orders, doctor. The more willingly because for the last hour or two my back has been smarting unmercifully. I do not feel the other wound much."

"That is because you have been sitting still. You will find it hurt you when you come to walk. Please go down carefully; a sudden movement might start your wounds again."

It was two or three days before Mr. Atherton again appeared on deck. His left arm was bandaged tightly to his body so as to prevent any movement of the shoulder-blade, and he walked stiffly to the deck-chair, which had been piled with cushions in readiness.

"I am glad to be out again, Mrs. Renshaw," Mr. Atherton said as she arranged the cushions to suit him. "Your husband, with Wilfrid and the two Allens, have kept me company, one or other of them, all the time, so I cannot say I have been dull. But it was much hotter below than it is here. However, I know the doctor was right in keeping me below, for the slightest movement gave me a great deal of pain. However, the wounds are going on nicely, and I hope by the time we get to Buenos Ayres I shall be fit for a trip on shore again."

"I hardly think so, Mr. Atherton; for if the weather continues as it is now—it is a nice steady breeze, and we have been running ever since we left Rio—I think we shall be there long before you are fit to go ashore."

"I do not particularly care about it," Mr. Atherton said "Buenos Ayres is not like Rio, but it is for the most part quite a modern town, and even in situation has little to recommend it. Besides, we shall be so far off that there will be no running backward and forward between the ship and the shore as there was at Rio. Of course, it depends a good deal on the amount of water coming down the river, but vessels sometimes have to anchor twelve miles above the town."

"I am sure I have no desire to go ashore," Mrs. Renshaw said, "and after the narrow escape Wilfrid had at Rio I should be glad if he did not set foot there again until we arrive at the end of the voyage."

"He is not likely to get into a scrape again," Mr. Atherton said. "Of course, it would have been wiser not to have stopped so late as they did in a town of whose ways they knew nothing; but you may be sure he will be careful another time. Besides, I fancy from what I have heard things are better managed there, and the population are more peaceable and orderly than at Rio. But, indeed, such an adventure as that which befell them might very well have happened to any stranger wandering late at night in the slums of any of our English seaports."

There was a general feeling of disappointment among the passengers when the Flying Scud dropped anchor in the turbid waters of the La Plata. The shore was some five or six miles away, and was low and uninteresting. The towers and spires of the churches of Buenos Ayres were plainly visible, but of the town itself little could be seen. As soon as the anchor was dropped the captain's gig was lowered, and he started for shore to make arrangements for landing the cargo.

The next morning a steam tug brought out several flats,

and the work of unloading commenced. A few passengers went ashore in the tug, but none of the Renshaws left the ship. Two days sufficed for getting out the goods for Buenos Ayres. The passengers who had been staying at hotels on shore came off with the last tug to the ship. Their stay ashore had been a pleasant one, and they liked the town, which, in point of cleanliness and order, they considered to be in advance of Rio.

CHAPTER V.

A BOAT EXPEDITION.

"Well, I am not sorry we are off again," Marion Renshaw said, as the men ran round with the capstan bars and the anchor came up from the shallow water. "What a contrast between this and Rio!"

"It is, indeed," Mr. Atherton, who was standing beside her, replied. "I own I should have liked to spend six months in a snug little craft going up the La Plata and Parana, especially the latter. The La Plata runs through a comparatively flat and—I will not say unfertile country, because it is fertile enough, but—a country deficient in trees, and offering but small attraction to a botanist; but the Parana flows north. Paraguay is a country but little visited by Europeans, and ought to be well worth investigation; but, as you say, I am glad enough to be out of this shallow water. In a short time we shall be looking out our wraps again. We shall want our warmest things for doubling Cape Horn, or rather what is called doubling Cape Horn, because in point of fact we do not double it at all."

"Do you mean we do not go round it?" Marion asked in surprise.

"We may, and we may not, Miss Renshaw. It will depend upon the weather, I suppose; but most vessels now go through the strait which separates Cape Horn itself from Tierra del Fuego."

"That is the Strait of Magellan, is it not?"

"Oh, no!" Mr. Atherton replied. "The Strait of Magellan lies still further to the north, and separates Tierra del Fuego from the mainland. I wish that we were going through it, for I believe the scenery is magnificent."

"But if it lies further north that must surely be our shortest way, so why should we not go through it?"

"If we were in a steamer we might do so, Miss Renshaw; but the channel is so narrow and intricate, and the tides and currents run with such violence that sailing vessels hardly ever attempt the passage. The strait we shall go through lies between Tierra del Fuego and the group of islands of which the Horn is the most southerly."

"Is the country inhabited?"

"Yes, by races of the most debased savages, with whom, I can assure you, I have no desire whatever to make any personal acquaintance."

"Not even to collect botanical specimens, Mr. Atherton?" the girl asked, smiling.

"Not even for that purpose, Miss Renshaw. I will do a good deal in pursuance of my favorite hobby, but I draw the line at the savages of Tierra del Fuego. Very few white men have ever fallen into their hands and lived to tell the tale, and certainly I should have no chance whatever."

"Why would you have less chance than other people, Mr. Atherton?"

"My attractions would be irresistible," Mr. Atherton replied gravely. "I should furnish meat for a whole tribe."

"How horrible!" Marion exclaimed. "What! are they cannibals?"

"Very much so indeed; and one can hardly blame

them, for it is the only chance they have of getting flesh. Their existence is one long struggle with famine and cold. They are not hunters, and are but poor fishermen. I firmly believe that if I were in their place I should be a cannibal myself."

"How can you say such things?" Marion asked indignantly. "I never know whether you are in earnest, Mr. Atherton. I am sure you would never be a cannibal."

"There is no saying what one might be if one were driven to it," he replied placidly. "Anyhow, I trust that I shall never be driven to it. In my various journeyings and adventures I am happy to say that I have never been forced to experience a prolonged fast, and it is one of the things I have no inclination to try. This weather is perfection, is it not?" he went on, changing the subject. "The Flying Scud is making capital way. I only hope it may last. It is sad to think that we shall soon exchange these balmy breezes for a biting wind. We are just saying, Wilfrid," he went on as the lad strolled up to them, "that you will soon have to lay aside your white flannels and put on a great coat and muffler."

"I shall not be sorry," Wilfrid replied. "After a month of hot weather one wants bracing up a bit, and I always enjoy cold."

"Then you should have gone out and setted in Iceland instead of New Zealand."

"I should not have minded that, Mr. Atherton. There is splendid fishing, I believe, and sealing, and all that sort of thing. But I do not suppose the others would have liked it. I am sure father would not. He cannot bear cold, and his study at home used aways to be kept up at almost the temperature of an oven all the winter. I should think New Zealand would exactly suit him."

Before the sun set they had the satisfaction of sailing

out of the muddy water of the La Plata, and of being once more in the bright blue sea. For the next week the Flying Scud sailed merrily southward without adventure. The air grew sensibly cooler each day, and the light garments of the tropics were already exchanged for warmer covering.

"Do you always get this sort of weather down here, captain?" Mrs. Renshaw asked.

"Not always, Mrs. Renshaw. The weather is generally fine, I admit, but occasionally short but very violent gales sweep down from off the land. They are known as *pamperos;* because, I suppose, they come from the pampas. They are very dangerous from the extreme suddenness with which they sweep down. If they are seen coming, and the vessel can be stripped of her canvas in time, there is little danger to be apprehended, for they are as short as they are violent."

"We have been wonderfully fortunate altogether so far," Mrs. Renshaw said. "We have not had a single gale since we left England. I trust that our good luck will continue to the end."

"I hope so too," the captain said. "I grant that a spell of such weather as we have been favored with is apt to become a little monotonous, and I generally find my passengers have a tendency after a time to became snappish and quarrelsome from sheer want of anything to occupy their minds. Still I would very much rather put up with that than with the chances of a storm."

"People must be very foolish to get out of temper because everything is going on well," Mrs. Renshaw said. "I am sure I find it perfectly delightful sailing on as we do."

"Then you see, madam, you are an indefatigable worker. I never see your hands idle; but to people who

do not work, a long voyage of unbroken weather must, I can very well understand, be monotonous. Of course with us who have duties to perform it is different. I have often heard passengers wish for what they call a good gale, but I have never heard a sailor who has once experienced one express such a wish. However stanch the ship, a great gale is a most anxious time for all concerned in the navigation of a vessel. It is, too, a time of unremitting hardship. There is but little sleep to be had; all hands are constantly on deck, and are continually wet to the skin. Great seas sweep over a ship, and each man has literally his life in his hand, for he may at any moment be torn from his hold and washed overboard, or have his limbs broken by some spar or hen-coop or other object swept along by the sea. It always makes me angry when I hear a passenger express a wish for a gale, in thoughtless ignorance of what he is desiring. If a storm comes we must face it like men; and in a good ship like the Flying Scud, well trimmed and not overladen, and with plenty of sea-room, we may feel pretty confident as to the result; but that is a very different thing from wishing to have one."

By the time they were a fortnight out from Buenos Ayres, Mr. Atherton and James Allen were both off the sick list; indeed the latter had been but a week in the doctor's hands. The adventure had bound the little party more closely together than before. The Allens had quite settled that when their friends once established themselves on a holding, they would, if possible, take one up in the neighborhood; and they and the young Renshaws often regretted that Mr. Atherton was only a bird of passage, and had no intention of fixing himself permanently in the colony. The air had grown very much colder of late, and the light clothes they had worn in the

tropics had already been discarded, and in the evening all were glad to put on warm wraps when they came on deck.

"I think," the captain said as Mr. Renshaw came up for his customary walk before breakfast, "we are going to have a change. The glass has fallen a good deal, and I did not like the look of the sun when it rose this morning."

"It looks to me very much as usual," Mr. Renshaw replied, shading his eyes and looking at the sun, "except perhaps that it is not quite so bright."

"Not so bright by a good deal," the captain said. "There is a change in the color of the sky—it is not so blue. The wind has fallen too, and I fancy by twelve o'clock there will be a calm. Of course we cannot be surprised if we do have a change. We have had a splendid spell of weather, and we are getting into stormy latitudes now."

When the passengers went up after breakfast they found that the Flying Scud was scarcely moving through the water. The sails hung idly against the masts, and the yards creaked as the vessel rose and fell slightly on an almost invisible swell.

"This would be a good opportunity," the captain said cheerfully, "to get down our light spars; the snugger we are the better for rounding the Horn. Mr. Ryan, send all hands aloft, and send down all spars over the topmast."

The crew swarmed up the rigging, and in two hours the Flying Scud was stripped of the upper yards and lofty spars.

"She looks very ugly," Marion Renshaw said. "Do you not think so, Mary?"

"Hideous," Mary Mitford agreed.

"She is in fighting trim now," Mr. Atherton said.

"Yes, but who are we going to fight?" Marion asked.

"We are going to have a skirmish with the weather, I fancy, Miss Renshaw. I don't say we are going to have a storm," he went on as the girls looked anxiously up at the sky, "but you can see for yourselves that there is a change since yesterday. The wind has dropped and the sky is dull and hazy, the sea looks sullen, the bright little waves we were accustomed to are all gone, and as you see by the motion of the vessel there is an underground swell, though we can scarcely notice it on the water."

"Which way do you think the wind will come from, Mr. Atherton?" Mary Mitford asked.

"I fancy it will come from the west, or perhaps northwest. Look at those light streaks of cloud high up in the air; they are traveling to the southeast."

"Look how fast they are going," Mary Mitford said as she looked up, "and we have not a breath of wind here."

"We shall have it soon," Mr. Atherton said. "You see that dark line on the water coming up from the west. I am glad to see it. It is very much better to have the wind freshen up gradually to a gale than to lie becalmed until it strikes you suddenly."

The girls stood at the poop-rail watching the sailors engaged in putting lashings on to every movable object on deck. In ten minutes the dark line came up to them, and the Flying Scud began to move through the water. The courses were brailed up and stowed. The wind rapidly increased in strength, and the captain presently requested the passengers to go below, or at any rate to give up their seats.

"There is nothing like having the deck cleared," he said. "If it comes on to blow a bit and there is any movement, the chairs would be charging about from side to side, and will not only break themselves up, but perhaps break some one's leg."

Four sailors folded up the chairs, piled them together, and passing cords over them lashed them to two ringbolts.

"Now, Mr. Ryan, we will get the topsails reefed at once. There is a heavy bank there to windward, and we had best get everything as snug as possible before that comes up to us."

The dark bank of mist rose rapidly, and the sailors had but just reached the deck after closely reefing the topsails before it was close upon them.

"Now, ladies, please go below," the captain said sharply. "There is rain as well as wind in the clouds; it will come down in bucketfuls when it does come."

This had the desired effect of sending most of the male passengers down as well as the ladies. A few remained near the companion ready to make a dive below when the squall struck them. Suddenly the wind ceased and the topsails flapped against the masts. There was a confused roaring sound astern, and a broad white line came along at race-horse speed toward the vessel.

"Get below, lads," Mr. Atherton said as he led the way "or you will be drenched in a moment."

They had but just reached the cabin when there was a deafening roar overhead, and almost at the same moment the vessel started as if struck by a heavy blow.

"Rain and wind together!" Mr. Atherton shouted in reply to the chorus of questions from those below. "Now, all you have got to do is to make yourselves comfortable, for there will be no going up again for some time."

For five minutes the tremendous downpour continued, and then ceased as suddenly as it commenced. The wind had dropped too; and the silence after the uproar was startling. It lasted but a few seconds; then the wind again struck the ship with even greater force than before, although, as she had not lost her way, the blow was less felt by those below. In five minutes the captain came below with his oilskin coat and sou'wester streaming with wet.

"I have just looked down to tell you," he said cheerfully, "that everything is going on well. The first burst of these gales is always the critical point, and we can congratulate ourselves that we have got through it without losing a spar or sail—thanks to our having had sufficient warning to get all snug, and to the gale striking us gradually. I am afraid you won't have a very comfortable time of it for the next day or two; but there is nothing to be at all uneasy about. The gale is off the land, and we have sea-room enough for anything. Now we have got rid of half our cargo the ship is in her very best trim, and though we may get her decks washed a bit by and by, she will be none the worse for that."

So saying he again went up on deck. For the next three days the gale blew with fury. There were no regular meals taken below, for the vessel rolled so tremendously that nothing would have remained on the plates and dishes; and the passengers were forced to content themselves with biscuit, with an occasional cup of coffee or basin of soup that the cook managed to warm up for them. The ladies for the most part kept their cabins, as did many of the male passengers, and the absence of regular meals was the less felt as the majority were suffering from seasickness. Wilfrid was occasionally ill, but managed to keep up, and from time to time went on

deck for a few minutes, while Marion spent most of her time on a seat at the top of the companion, looking out on the sea.

It was a magnificent sight. Tremendous waves were following the ship, each as it approached lifting her stern high in the air and driving her along at a speed that seemed terrific, then passing on and leaving her to sink down into the valley behind it. The air was thick with flying spray torn from the crest of the waves. At first it seemed as if each sea that came up behind the vessel would break over her stern and drive her headforemost down; but as wave after wave passed without damage the sense of anxiety passed off, and Marion was able to enjoy the grandeur of the sea. Wilfrid, Mr. Atherton, and the Allens often came in to sit with her, and to take shelter for a time from the fury of the wind. But talking was almost impossible; the roar of the wind in the rigging, the noise of the waves as they struck the ship, and the confused sound of the battle of the elements being too great to allow a voice to be heard, except when raised almost to shouting point.

But Marion had no inclination for talking. Snugly as Mr. Atherton had wedged her in with pillows and cushions, it was as much as she could do to retain her seat, as the vessel rolled till the lower yards almost touched the water, and she was too absorbed in the wild grandeur of the scene to want companionship.

"The captain says the glass is beginning to rise," Mr. Atherton said as he met her the fourth morning of the gale; "and that he thinks the worst is over."

"I shall be glad for the sake of the others," Marion replied, "for the sea to go down. Father and mother are both quite worn out; for it is almost impossible for them to sleep, as they might be thrown out of their berths if

they did not hold on. For myself, I am in no hurry for the gale to be over, it is so magnificently grand. Don't you think so, Mr. Atherton?"

"It is grand, lassie, no doubt," Mr. Atherton said; "but I have rather a weakness for dry clothes and comfortable meals—to say nothing of being able to walk or sit perpendicularly, and not being obliged constantly to hold on for bare life. This morning I feel that under happier circumstances I could enjoy a steak, an Irish stew, and a couple of eggs, but a biscuit and a cup of coffee are all I can hope for."

"I believe you enjoy it as much as I do, Mr. Atherton," the girl said indignantly; "else why do you stay upon deck all the time in spite of the wind and spray?"

"Well, you see, Miss Renshaw, you ladies have an objection to my smoking my pipe below; and beside, what with the groans and moans from the cabins, and the clatter of the swinging trays, and the noise of the waves, and one thing and another, there is little to tempt me to stay below. But really I shall be very glad when it is over. The ship has been doing splendidly; and as the wind has blown from the same quarter the whole time, the sea though very high is regular, and everything is going on well. Still a gale is a gale, and you can never answer for the vagaries of the wind. If it were to veer round to another quarter, for instance, you would in a few hours get a broken sea here that would astonish you, and would try all the qualities of the Flying Scud. Then again we have been running south with tremendous speed for the last three days, and if it were to go on for a few days longer we might find ourselves down among the ice. Therefore, I say, the sooner the gale is over the better I shall be pleased."

Toward evening there was a sensible abatement in the

force of the wind, and the following morning the gale had so far abated that the captain prepared to haul his course for the west.

"We have been running south at the rate of fully three hundred miles a day," he said, "and are now very far down. The moment this warm wind drops and we get it from the south you will find that you will need every wrap you have to keep you warm. If the gale had lasted I had made up my mind to try to get her head to it, and to lie to. We are a great deal too close to the region of ice to be pleasant."

The change in the course of the vessel was by no means appreciated by the passengers, for the motion was very much rougher and more unpleasant than that to which they had now become accustomed. However, by the following morning the wind had died away to a moderate breeze, and the sea had very sensibly abated. The topsails were shaken out of their reefs; and although the motion was still violent most of the passengers emerged from their cabins and came on deck to enjoy the sun, which was now streaming brightly through the broken clouds. The captain was in high glee; the ship had weathered the gale without the slightest damage. Not a rope had parted, not a sail been blown away, and the result fully justified the confidence he felt in his ship and her gear.

"It is a comfort," he remarked, "to sail under liberal owners. Now, my people insist on having their ships as well found as possible, and if I condemn spars, sails, ropes or stays, they are replaced without a question. And it is the cheapest policy in the long run. There is nothing so costly as stinginess on board a ship. The giving way of a stay may mean the loss of the mast and all its gear, and that may mean the loss of a ship. The blowing away

of a sail at a critical moment may mean certain disaster; and yet there are many owners who grudge a fathom of new rope or a bolt of canvas, and who will risk the safety of their vessels for the petty economy of a few pounds."

The next day the wind had dropped entirely. The topgallant masts were sent up with their yards and sails, and by dinner-time the Flying Scud looked more like herself. As soon as the wind lulled all on board were conscious of a sudden fall of temperature. Bundles of wraps were undone and greatcoats and cloaks got out, and although the sun was still shining brightly the poop of the Flying Scud soon presented a wintry appearance. There was no sitting about now. Even the ladies had abandoned their usual work, and by the sharp walking up and down on deck it was evident that even the warm wraps were insufficient in themselves, and that brisk exercise was necessary to keep up the circulation.

"Well, what do you think of this, Mrs. Renshaw?" Mr. Atherton asked.

"I like it," she said decidedly; "but it is certainly a wonderfully sudden change from summer to winter. My husband does not like it at all. We never agreed on the subject of temperature. He liked what I call a close study, while I enjoy a sharp walk well wrapped up on a winter's day."

"I agree with you," Mr. Atherton said. "I can bear any amount of cold, but heat completely knocks me up. But then, you see, the cold never has a chance of penetrating to my bones."

"Which course shall we take now, do you suppose? South of Cape Horn or through the Strait?"

"It will depend upon the winds we meet with, I imagine," Mr. Atherton replied. "If the wind continues from the south, I should say the captain would keep well

south of the Horn; but if it heads us from the west at all, we may have to go through the Strait, which, personally, I own that I should prefer. It has gone round nearly a point since I came on deck this morning. If it goes round a bit more we certainly shall not be able to lay our course round the Horn, for I do not think we are far to the south of it now."

By evening the wind had hauled further to the west, and the ship's head pointed more to the north than it had done in the morning. The passengers enjoyed the change, for the temperature had risen rapidly, and many of the warm wraps that had been got up were laid aside. At twelve o'clock the captain had taken observations, and found that the ship's position was nearly due south of the Falkland Isles.

"We had a narrow squeak of it, Mr. Ryan," he said to the first mate. "All the time we were running before that gale I had that group of islands on my mind."

"So had I, sir," the mate replied. "I was praying all the time that the wind would keep a bit to the west of north, for I knew that when it began our position was, as near as may be, due north of them. I guessed what you were thinking of when you told the man at the wheel to edge away to the east as much as he dared, though that was mighty little."

"By my reckoning," the captain said, "we could not have passed more than thirty miles to the east of them. We have made about eighty miles of westing since we got on our course, and we are now just on the longitude of the westernmost point of the islands. They are about a hundred miles to the north of us."

The wind continued from the same quarter, and on taking his observation on the following day the captain announced that if there were no change he reckoned upon

just making the mouth of the Strait between Tierra del Fuego and the islands. On going on deck two mornings later land was seen on the port bow.

"There is Cape Horn," the captain said; "that lofty peak covered with snow. The island nearest to us is Herschel Island. The large island not far from the Horn is Wollaston Island. As you see, there are several others. It is not the sort of place one would like to come down upon in a gale, and if I had had my choice I would rather have gone a hundred miles south of the Horn. But the wind would not allow us to lie that course, and after the gale we had the other day we have a right to reckon upon finer weather, and in light winds it might have taken us another two or three days beating round."

"The wind is very light now," Mr. Renshaw remarked.

"Yes, and I am afraid it will be lighter still presently," the captain said.

The vessel made but slow way, and in the afternoon the wind dropped altogether. The Flying Scud was now two or three miles from the coast of Tierra del Fuego, and the passengers examined the inhospitable-looking coast through their glasses. At one or two points light wreaths of smoke were seen curling up, telling of encampments of the natives.

"I think, Mr. Ryan," the captain said, "I will take her in and anchor in one of the bays. This breath of air might be enough to move her through the water if she were going free, but it is nearly dead ahead of us now. I do not like the idea of drifting all night along this coast. Beside, we may be able to get some fish from the natives, which will be a change for the passengers."

The vessel's head was turned toward the shore, and now that the light air was well on the beam it sufficed to enable the vessel to steal through the water at the rate

of about a knot an hour. At about four o'clock the anchor was dropped in a bay at a distance of half a mile from land, the sails were furled, and the passengers watched the shores in hopes that some native craft might make its appearance; but there was no sign of life.

"Either the natives have no fish to sell, or rather exchange," the captain said, "for, of course, money is of no use to them, or they are afraid of us. Maybe they have been massacring some shipwrecked crew, and believe we are a ship-of-war come down to punish them. At any rate they seem determined not to show."

The next morning the sea was as smooth as glass, and there was not a breath of air.

"Would you let us have a boat, captain?" Mr. Atherton asked. "It will make a pleasant change, and perhaps some of the natives might come off and sell us fish, as they would not be afraid of us as they might be of the ship."

"Yes, if you like to make up a party, Mr. Atherton, you can have a boat; but you must not land. The natives are very treacherous, and it would not be safe to set foot on shore. Mr. Ryan, will you get the cutter into the water after breakfast? You had better take with you two or three muskets. I do not think there is any fear of an attack, and besides you could out-row the native craft, still it is always as well to be prepared."

Mr. Atherton soon made up his party. Wilfrid and the two Allens were delighted at the offer, and Marion and the Miss Mitfords also petitioned to be allowed to go, although Mr. Atherton had not intended to take ladies with him. Two other young men named Hardy and Wilson were also invited to join, and this made up the complement that the cutter could carry in comfort. The crew consisted of six sailors at the oars, and Mr. Ryan himself took the helm.

"You had better wrap up well," Mr. Atherton said to the girls, "for you will find it cold sitting in a boat. The thermometer must be down near freezing point."

Mr. Atherton was the last to take his seat, and he brought with him his rifle.

"Why, what are you going to shoot, Mr. Atherton?" Marion asked.

"I do not know that I am going to shoot anything," he replied; "but it is always well to be prepared. You see I have made preparations in other ways," he added, as the steward handed him down a large basket, which he placed in the stern sheets.

"But we are only going for an hour or two, Mr. Atherton," Wilfrid remarked. "We cannot want anything to eat when we have only just finished breakfast."

"I do not think it at all likely we shall want to open the hamper, Wilfrid; but you see it is always best to be prepared. The weather looks perfectly settled, but, like the natives of these parts, it is treacherous. As I proposed this expedition I feel a sort of responsibility, and have therefore, you see, taken precautions against every contingency."

"I do not think there is any chance of a change," Mr. Ryan said. "It looks as if the calm might last for a week. Still, one can never be wrong in preparing for the worst. Beside, this cold weather gives one a wonderful appetite, and a drop of the cratur never comes amiss."

By this time the boat was fairly away from the ship, and the sailors, who like the passengers regarded the expedition as a pleasant change, stretched out to their oars. The mate steered for the headland to the west, and after passing it kept the boat at a distance of a few hundred yards from the shore.

"Is there any current here, Mr. Ryan?" Wilfrid asked as he watched the rocks and low stunted trees.

"Very little," the mate replied. "Sometimes it runs very strongly here, but at present it is not much to speak of. I do not think it was running more than a quarter of a mile an hour past the ship, but no doubt there is a good deal more further out."

To the disappointment of those on board there were no signs of natives.

"It will be very tiresome if they do not come out," Marion said. "I want to see a real cannibal."

"I do not so much care about the cannibals, Miss Renshaw, but I want to see their fish. I have not tasted a really decent fish since I left England; but in these cold waters they ought to be as good as they are at home. I believe the natives catch them by spearing them by torchlight, and in that case they ought to be good-sized fellows." The men after the first start had dropped into a long, steady stroke, and as the boat glided along past bay and headland no one paid any attention to time, until the mate, looking at his watch, said:

"Faith, we have been gone an hour and a half; I clean forgot all about time. I think we had better be turning. It will be dinner-time before we reach the ship as it is." The boat's head was turned. "I think," the mate went on, "we may as well steer from headland to headland, instead of keeping round the bays. It will save a good bit of distance, and the natives evidently do not mean to show themselves."

"They are very provoking," Miss Mitford said. "I can see smoke among the trees over there, and I have no doubt that they are watching us, although we cannot see them."

"You ought to have waved your handkerchief as we came along, Miss Mitford," James Allen remarked; "or to have stood up and showed yourselves. They would no

doubt have come off then and offered presents in token of admiration."

The girls laughed. "I do not suppose they would appreciate our charms," Miss Mitford said. "They are not in their line, you see."

"That they certainly are not, Miss Mitford," the mate laughed. "I saw some of them the last time I came through here, and hideous-looking creatures they are, and wear no clothes to speak of."

So laughing and chatting with their eyes fixed on the shore the party never looked seaward, until a sudden exclamation from the mate called their attention to that direction.

"Be Jabers!" he exclaimed, "here is a sea-fog rolling down on us from the south!"

They looked and saw what seemed like a wall of white smoke rolling along the water toward them. At this moment the boat was about halfway between two headlands, which were a mile and a half apart, and the shore abreast of it was three-quarters of a mile distant. The sun was shining brightly upon the rolling mist, and the girls uttered an exclamation of admiration.

"How fast it comes!" Marion said. "Why, it will be here directly!"

The mate put the tiller a-starboard. "Row, men!" he said in a sharp voice; for they had for a moment ceased to pull.

"Have you a compass?" Mr. Atherton asked.

The mate shook his head. "I am no better than an idiot to have come without one," he said. "But who could have dreamed we should want it!"

A minute later a light wreath of mist crossed the boat, and almost immediately the great fog bank rolled over it. An exclamation broke from several of those on board.

So sudden was the change of temperature that it seemed as if an icy hand had been laid upon them.

"It is fortunate that we are not far from shore," Mr. Atherton said to the mate. "There is nothing for it but to coast along close in."

"That is the only thing to do," Mr. Ryan replied. "But it will be an awkward business; for, as we noticed when we came along, the shore is in many places studded with rocks. However, we must risk that, and by going on slowly and carefully we may get off with slight damage even if we hit one. It is not as if the water was rough."

The fog was so thick that they could scarcely see the ends of the oar-blades.

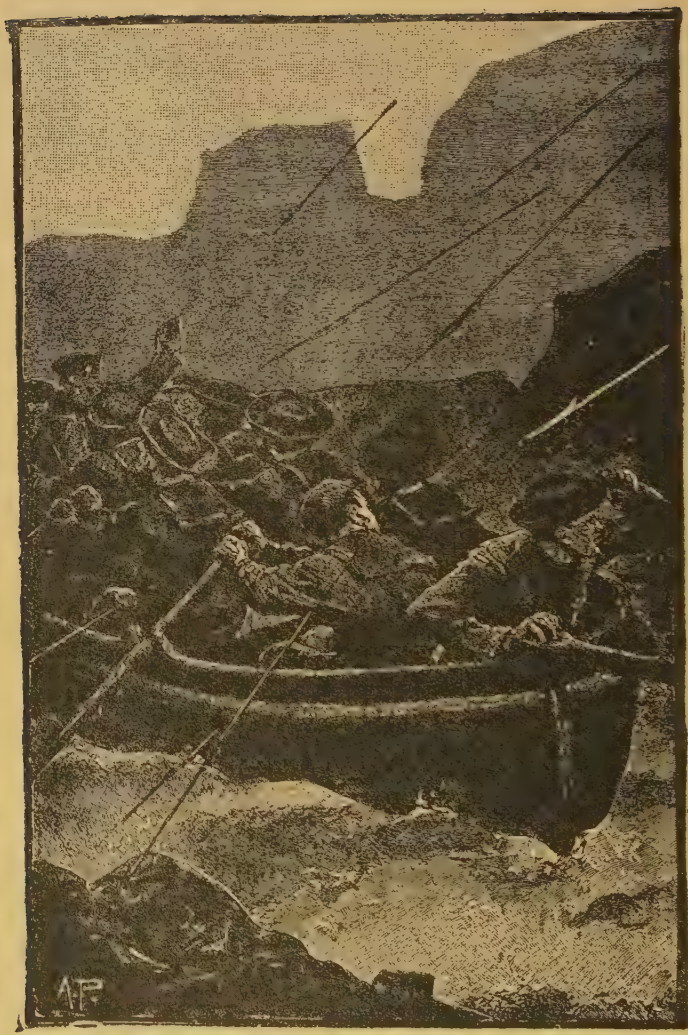
"How are we to find the ship?" Marion asked.

"There will be no difficulty about that, Miss Renshaw. They will be sure to be firing guns as signals for us. There!" he broke off as the boom of a cannon came across the water. "Beside, with the land on our right hand and this icy breeze from the south, we cannot go far out of our way."

"Row easy, men," the mate commanded. "We cannot be far from shore now, and we must begin to look out sharp for rocks. Row light and aisy, and do not make more noise with your oars than you can help. The natives may be listening for us; and we do not want a shower of spears in the boat. Mr. Allen, will you go forward into the bows, and keep a sharp lookout for rocks?"

James Allen went forward, and two or three minutes later cried, "Easy all! Hold her up!" Quickly as the order was obeyed the boat's stem grated on the shore before her way was lost.

"Back her off, lads!" the mate cried. As the boat glided off into deep water again there was a yell from the



Maori. A DOZEN SPEARS STRUCK THE WATER ROUND HER.—Page 87.

shore, and a dozen spears struck the water round her. Fortunately none of them struck her, for she was invisible to the natives, who had been guided to the spot by the sound of the oars.

"Not an encouraging reception," Mr. Atherton remarked quietly. "Well, ladies, you have not seen the cannibals as yet, but you have heard them. I think the best plan, Mr. Ryan, will be to tear up one of these rugs and muffle the oars."

"I think we may as well do so," the mate replied. "However, their sharp ears are sure to hear us if we are close in shore, and we dare not go far out or we might lose our bearings altogether."

"I do not think we can do that. In the first place, you see, there is the breeze that brought down the fog to guide us, and in the second the guns of the ship. We cannot go far wrong with them; and I should say that when we once get out as far as we believe the headland to lie, the best thing will be to steer direct for the ship. The danger in that way would certainly be far less than it is from rocks and savages if we keep near the shore."

"I think you are right. We will row straight out against the wind for a quarter of an hour, that will take us clear of the headland, and we will then shape our course direct for the guns."

CHAPTER VI.

PUTTING IN THE REFIT.

The boat rowed steadily in the course that was believed would take them straight out to sea, the mate listening attentively for the sound of the distant guns. The reports came up every two or three minutes, their sound muffled by the fog. "Sure it's mighty difficult to tell where the sound comes from, but I think it is well over there on our beam. Do you not think so?" the mate asked Mr. Atherton.

"I think so; yes, I feel sure that we are rowing nearly due south. Even without the sound of the guns I should feel sure that we cannot at present be far out of that course. I noticed that as we came along you hardly had to use any helm, and that the strength on both sides was very evenly balanced. So that starting out as we did from the shore, we must be traveling pretty straight. Of course in the long run we should be sure to sweep round one way or the other and lose our bearings altogether were it not for the guns. Wilfrid, we will appoint you timekeeper."

"What am I to keep time of, Mr. Atherton?"

"You are to keep time of the guns. I think they are firing about every three minutes, but you had better time the first two or three. If you find them three minutes apart, it will be your duty a quarter of a minute before the gun is due to say in a loud voice 'Stop,' then all conversation

is to cease till we hear the report. Unless we are all silent and listening, it is very difficult to judge the exact direction from which the sound comes, and it is important to keep as straight a line as we can. There is the gun now, begin to count."

"I think we can turn our head in that direction now," the mate said. "It is just twenty minutes since we left the shore, and we ought to be fully a mile out beyond the headland."

"I quite agree with you. We have certainly a clear course now to the ship if we do not make any blunder in keeping it."

The mate put the tiller a-starboard.

"I wonder how long I am to keep it over?" he said. "It is a queer sensation steering without having an idea which way you are going."

"The next gun will tell us whether we have gone too far round or not far enough," Mr. Atherton observed.

"Well, we will try that," the mate said after a short pause. "I should think we ought to have made half a turn now."

"Stop!" Wilfrid exclaimed a minute later. "Easy rowing, lads, and listen for the gun."

The mate ordered silence in the boat. Half a minute later the report of the gun was again heard. There was a general exclamation of surprise, for instead of coming, as they expected, from a point somewhere ahead, it seemed to them all that the sound was almost astern of them.

"Now, who would have thought that?" the mate said. "I had no idea she had gone round so far. Well, we must try again, and go to work more gently this time. Row on, men!"

The tiller was put slightly a-port, and the boat con-

tinued her way. The talk that had gone on among the passengers was now hushed. Mr. Atherton had been chatting gayly with the girls from the time the fog came on, and except at the moment when they went ashore and were attacked by the natives, no uneasiness had been felt, for the sound of the guns had seemed to all an assurance that there could be no difficulty in rejoining the ship. The discovery that for a moment they had been actually going away from the ship had, for the first time since they rowed away from the shore, caused a feeling of real uneasiness, and when Wilfrid again gave notice that the report would soon be heard, all listened intently, and there was a general exclamation of satisfaction when the sound was heard nearly ahead.

"We have got it now," the mate said. "Row on, lads; a long, steady stroke and we shall be in before dinner is cold yet."

The conversation now recommenced.

"Is it any use my stopping here any longer?" Jim Allen cried from the bow; "because if not I will come aft to you. It is a good deal warmer sitting together than it is out here by myself."

"Yes, you may as well come aft," the mate replied. "As long as we keep the guns ahead we know that we are clear of rocks. It certainly has come on bitterly cold."

There was a general chorus of assent.

"I should think it would be a good thing, Ryan, to get the sail aft and unlash it from the gaff and put it over our legs; it will make a lot of difference in the warmth."

"I think that that is a very good idea," the mate assented. "Lay in your oar for a minute, Johnson, and get that sail aft."

The sail was passed aft, unlashed from the yard, and

spread out, adding considerably to the comfort of all those sitting astern; and now that the ship's guns were booming ahead, and they had become accustomed to the thick curtain of cloud hanging round them, the feeling of uneasiness that the girls had felt was entirely dissipated, and Mr. Atherton had no longer any occasion to use his best efforts to keep up their spirits. All laughed and chatted over their adventure, which, as they said, far exceeded in interest anything they had been promised when they started from the ship. The only drawback, as they all agreed, was the cold, which was really severe.

"We do not seem to come up to the guns as we ought to," Mr. Atherton said to the mate after the boat had been rowing for some time.

"That is just what I was thinking," Mr. Ryan replied. "I fancy we must have got a strong current out here against us."

"I expect we have. Ryan, I tell you what. The men have been rowing for some hours now since they left the ship, I think it would be a good thing if our youngsters were to relieve some of them for a spell. What do you say, lads?"

Wilfrid, the Allens, Hardy, and Wilson all exclaimed that they should be delighted to take a turn, as it would warm their blood. "We shall be able to give them all a spell," Mr. Atherton said, "for there are just six of us."

"I am certainly not going to let you pull, and you scarcely out of the doctor's hands," the mate said bluntly. "Why, you must be mad to think of such a thing! Here, do you take the tiller and I will row the stroke-oar. Easy all, lads; put on your jackets. Four of you come aft, and the other two go into the bows."

"I wish we could row," Marion said regretfully, as the new crew bent to their oars. "I have done a lot of row-

ing at home, Mr. Atherton, and they say I row very fairly."

"I am afraid you would not be of much assistance here, young lady," Mr. Atherton said. "It's one thing to work a light, well-balanced oar, such as you use in a gig up the river, but it is a very different one to tug away at one of these heavy oars in a sea-going boat like this with ten sitters in her. We shall want all our strength to get back, you may be sure. There must be a strong current against us, and there is little chance of our being back, as we hoped, by dinner-time."

After the men had had half an hour's rest Mr. Ryan told them to take their seats and double bank the oars.

"We shall travel all the faster," he said to Mr. Atherton, "and now that they have got their wind again it is far better that they should be rowing than sitting still. The guns are a good deal nearer now. I do not think that the ship can be more than a mile or a mile and a half away."

"I do not suppose she is," Mr. Atherton replied. "I think I will fire off my rifle two or three times. They ought to be able to hear it now, and it will relieve their minds."

He discharged his rifle four or five times, and they fancied that they heard shots in return.

"Hullo!" Mr. Atherton exclaimed suddenly. "Easy all! Hold her up hard all!" Although the order was entirely unexpected it was given so sharply that it was instantly obeyed, and the boat was brought to a stand-still before she had advanced another length. Then the rowers looked round to see what had been the occasion of the sudden order. In front of them, scarce ten feet away, towered up a dark mass of rock. They could only see it ahead of the boat, and how high it was or how far it extended on either side they knew not.

"Why, what is this?" the mate said in astonishment. "We did not notice any islands as we came along. It has been a narrow escape, for at the rate at which we were going through the water we should have stove in our bow had we run on it."

"We have had a narrower escape than we deserve," Mr. Atherton said. "I cannot think how we can have been so foolish."

"What do you mean?" the mate asked.

"Why, we have been steering straight for the guns, have we not?"

"Of course we have."

"Well, we ought not to have done so. If the ship had been lying well out from the land it would have been all right; but she is lying in a deep bay, and of course a straight course to her from the point we started from would take us just where we are, that is ashore, on the other side of the headland."

"Of course it would. We ought to have kept well to seaward of the guns till they bore right on our beam, and then headed in to her. Well, fortunately no harm has been done, but we have had a mighty narrow escape. If the fog had been as thick as it was when it first came down upon us we should have gone right into it before we saw it."

The boat was turned and rowed out to sea for some distance, then they again headed her in the direction in which they wished to go, but keeping the guns well inshore of them until they judged by the sound that they were nearly opposite to her, then they rowed straight toward her. The sound of their oars was heard, and a loud hail informed them of the exact position of the ship, and two or three minutes later a dark image loomed up in front of the boat.

"All well, Mr. Ryan?" the captain shouted.

"All well, sir."

"You have given us a great fright," the captain went on. "We expected you back at least two hours ago, thinking of course you would have returned when the fog set in, even if you had not done so before."

"We had turned, sir, before the fog rolled in; but what with losing our way, and the difficulty of keeping our course in the fog, and the fact that there is, we think, a strong current that was running against us further out, we have been a long time coming back. So you see, we have double banked all the oars."

By this time they were lying by the gangway. It was found that the girls in spite of their wraps were so stiff with the cold that they had to be assisted up the gangway to the deck. Exercise warmed the blood of the rest, and they were soon on deck. Mr. Atherton, who alone of the men had not been rowing, had some little difficulty in getting up, although, as he said, he had no more right to feel cold than a walrus, protected as he was by nature.

There had been much anxiety on board until the shots fired by Mr. Atherton were heard. The captain had ordered plenty of hot soup to be got ready, and the girls soon felt in a comfortable glow. Mr. Atherton gave a comical account of their adventures, but he did not conceal the fact that at one time their position had been really a perilous one, and that if they had not been pretty vigilant they might have fallen into the hands of the natives.

"Well, all is well that ends well," Mr. Renshaw said, "but I think we will have no more boat excursions as long as we are in the neighborhood of cannibals. Of course no one could have foreseen the fog coming on so suddenly, but you have evidently all had a narrow escape."

Those who had taken part in the adventure, however, were highly pleased with their share in it, and agreed that although perhaps at the time it was unpleasant it was very exciting, and was an incident that they should never forget all their lives.

The fog continued for three days, at the end of which time an easterly wind set in and the air cleared, and the Flying Scud weighed her anchor and proceeded on her voyage. Ten days later a gale set in from the south. The cold was intense, and the spray as it flew from her bows cased her fore-rigging and deck with ice. The wind increased hourly in fury, and the captain decided to run before it. "We have plenty of sea-room," he said, "and shall get out of this bitter cold as we get further north. It will not last long, I dare say."

Day after day, however, the gale continued, seeming to increase rather than diminish in force. On the morning of the sixth day after it had begun the passengers heard a tremendous crash on deck. Wilfrid ran up the companion and looked out, and reported that the mainmast and the fore-topmast had gone overboard. Fortunately the gust that had done this damage proved to be the climax of the gale; by nightfall its force had sensibly abated, and two days later it fell to a calm, and all hands set to work to repair damages.

"I have no spar that will be of any use for a mainmast," the captain said. "We must content ourselves with getting up a fore-topmast and then under what sail we can set upon that and the mizzen make for one of the islands and try to get a good-sized spar for the mainmast. I reckon that we are not more than two hundred and fifty miles from the Austral Group. We have been blown nearly twenty degrees north."

Three days later land was seen ahead, and this the

captain, after taking an observation, declared to be Malayta, one of the largest islands of the group.

"I would rather have gone on under this reduced sail," he said to Mr. Atherton, in whom he had great confidence, "if we had been sure of fine weather; but that we cannot reckon upon at this time of year, and I should not like to be caught in another gale in this crippled state so near the islands. So of the two evils I consider it the least to go in and try and get a spar that will do for our purpose."

"What is the evil of going in?" Mr. Atherton asked.

"The natives," the captain replied shortly. "They are a treacherous lot in all these islands; but the Australs bear a particularly bad reputation, and we shall have to be very careful in our dealings with them."

"Well, as we are forewarned they are not likely to take us by surprise, captain; and as, with the crew and passengers, we can muster a pretty strong force, we ought to be able to beat off any open attack."

"Yes, I think we could do that," the captain agreed. "If I did not think so I would not put in, but would take the chance of our making our way, crippled as we are, to New Zealand. The thing we shall have to guard against is a sudden and treacherous onslaught; the crews of many ships have been massacred owing to carelessness and overconfidence. However, we will not be caught napping, and I therefore hope to get off unscathed."

As they neared the land the passengers were delighted with the aspect of the shore. Groves of trees came down to the very edge of the water; in the interior the land was high, but was covered to the summit of the hills with foliage. As they approached, and the captain gave orders to prepare for anchoring, they could see a number of natives gathered on the narrow strip of sand close to

the water. They were waving boughs of trees in token of friendship, and were, as far as could be seen by the aid of a telescope, unarmed.

"They look friendly, mother," Marion said, after watching them through the glass. "Won't it be nice to land and take a walk among those feathery-looking trees! There will be no fear of fogs or cold here; the temperature is quite perfect"

"You will not land, I can assure you, young lady," the captain, who was passing by and overheard her, said. "Those fellows look friendly enough, I agree, but there are no more treacherous rascals among the islanders of the Pacific. I shall give them as wide a berth as I can, and get them if possible to cut a spar and tow it out to us, instead of sending a party on shore to fetch it. No one will leave this ship with my permission, unless it be a boat's party armed to the teeth to fetch water. These fellows are as treacherous as the natives of Tierra del Fuego, and vastly more warlike and dangerous."

"Are they cannibals, captain?" Mrs. Renshaw asked.

"That I cannot tell you for certain, Mrs. Renshaw. They are thieves and murderers, but whether they eat human flesh is more than I can tell. It does not concern me greatly whether if they kill me they eat me afterward or not; but I do not mean to give them the chance of killing me or any of us, I can assure you."

"After the character you have given me of them I have no longer the slightest inclination to land, captain."

As soon as the vessel came to an anchor a number of canoes put out, laden with yams, cocoanuts, and other vegetables and fruits for exchange. Had they been allowed they would have come alongside and climbed up to the deck, but the captain would not permit them to come within thirty or forty yards. Although there was

no one on board who could speak their language, his emphatic gestures were understood by the natives, and were sufficient to show them that he was not to be trifled with. Two boats only were allowed to approach at a time, and a guard of six sailors with muskets were placed on deck, with orders to prevent any one coming up, and to cover those who descended the gangway. The younger passengers thought that the captain was unnecessarily timid; but, ready as he was to oblige them on ordinary occasions, they saw that this time it would be no use to try to change his determination that none should go on shore. Going down the gangway they bargained with the natives, giving little articles in exchange for fruit.

Mr. Atherton was evidently of the captain's opinion as to the necessity for prudence, and had stationed himself with his rifle near the gangway. "They look quite peaceful and cheerful," Marion Renshaw said to him. "Do you think there is really any use in all these precautions, Mr. Atherton?"

"I do indeed, Miss Renshaw. I do not think one can be too careful when dealing with people who are notoriously so treacherous."

"Are you a good shot with a rifle, Mr. Atherton?"

"Yes; although I say it myself, I am an exceptionally good shot. I have practiced a great deal with the rifle, and have, I suppose, a natural aptitude for it; for when I fire I am morally certain of hitting my mark, though I am hardly conscious of taking aim."

When the contents of a few boats had been taken on board the captain made signs that he required no more, and the natives, with looks of evident discontent, paddled back to the shore.

"We shall have some chiefs off in the morning," the

captain said. "To-day they have kept in the background, but seeing that we are wary and on our guard they will probably come off to-morrow to view matters for themselves. I shall let them perceive that I am well prepared, and it may be when they see this they will be inclined to do a little honest trading, and to bring off a strong spar with which we can at any rate make a shift for our mainmast. We will keep watch and watch as if we were at sea. It is as likely as not some of their canoes may be coming out in the night to see if we are to be caught napping."

"It is horrid," Kate Mitford said, as she with her sister, Marion, and several of the younger passengers stood together that evening on the poop looking toward the shore. The young moon was sinking in the west, the stars shone with great brilliancy, and the water was as smooth as glass. The outline of the palms could be made out against the sky, and in several places the light of fires could be perceived, and the stillness of the evening was broken by the hum of distant voices. "It is really a shame that we cannot go ashore. I am sure the savages looked civil and friendly, and it would be delightful to wander about in such a wood as that."

Two or three voices were raised in assent.

"Have you heard the little story of the spider and the fly, Miss Kate?" Mr. Atherton said, moving across from the other side of the deck, where he was smoking a cigar. "In that case, you know, it was the prettiest little bower that ever you did espy, and perhaps the fly admired it just as much as you admire that grove ashore. The result of a visit would be identical in both cases. Those on board other ships have been taken in by the peaceful appearance of the natives, and the loveliness of the islands, and the result was fatal to them. Personally, I

should feel much more comfortable if I saw those savages putting out in a body in their canoes to attack the ship than I do now while they are keeping up this pretense of friendliness. An open danger one can meet, but when you know that treachery is intended, but no idea what form it will take or when the mask of friendship will be thrown off, it is trying to the nerves. Fortunately we know their character, and may hope to be ready when the danger comes. Still the waiting is trying."

"And you really feel that, Mr. Atherton?" Marion Renshaw asked.

"I do indeed, Miss Renshaw. We may get away without trouble; but if so it will be solely because the natives see that we are prepared for them and are not be taken by surprise. Seeing our crippled state, my own opinion is, that the natives will not let us go off without making at least one attempt to surprise us."

Mr. Atherton spoke strongly, for he thought that it was possible that some of the youngsters might, unless thoroughly roused to a sense of danger, do something foolish and rash. His words had the effect desired. His share in the affair at Rio had caused him to be regarded with respect and admiration by the young men on board, and they felt that if in his opinion the danger was grave it was not for them to doubt its reality. A vigilant watch was kept all night, and loaded muskets were served out to the watch on deck. The guns had been loaded before they anchored, and the spare muskets were placed so as to be handy for the watch below should they be suddenly called up. After the moon went down a light mist rose on the surface of the sea. Several times during the night faint sounds were heard near the ship, but immediately the officer of the watch challenged, silence reigned for a considerable time.

"How has the night passed, Ryan?" Mr. Atherton asked the first officer as soon as he came on deck, just as daylight was breaking.

"There have been some of them near us all night," Mr. Ryan replied. "I do not think they were in force, but they wanted to see whether we kept a sharp watch; and I think we have satisfied them as to that, for every time the slightest noise was heard we hailed at once. I should like to have sent a musket-ball in the direction of the sound, but as we must get a spar, if possible, and shall be all the better for a score or two casks of fresh water, it won't do to begin to quarrel with them. Once we get what we want on board the beggars may attack us as soon as they like. It would do them a world of good to get handsomely thrashed, and to be taught that vessels are not to be plundered with impunity."

"As you say, it might do them good, but I hope there will be no trouble. I have no doubt whatever that we should beat them off, but we might lose some lives in doing it; besides, we have ladies on board."

"I hope so too; and, prepared as we are, I should feel quite safe if it was not for that mast being gone. They know that we are comparative cripples, and no doubt looked upon us as lawful booty when they saw us making in; and I do not think they will let themselves be balked of their prey without an effort."

"That is just my view of the matter, and I mean to keep a sharp lookout while we are here. You will all have your hands full, and I will get two or three of the young fellows to join with me in keeping a sharp watch over their doings."

"That is a good plan," the mate agreed. "There will, as you say, be plenty for us to do, and it worries one to have to attend to work and to keep one's eyes at the back

of one's head at the same time. Of course we shall always have a watch set whatever we are doing, still I have more faith in your lookout than in that of half a dozen fo'castle hands."

When the two Allens and Wilfrid came on deck Mr. Atherton drew them aside. "Look here, lads," he began. "You heard what I said last night. I meant it, and I am sure I was not wrong, for there have been canoes hovering about us all night. Now, in a short time the officers and crew will be seeing about getting water on board, and if the natives bring out a spar that will do as a jury mainmast there will be the work of trimming it, getting it into its place, and rigging it. My own opinion is, that now the natives see we are suspicious and on the watch they will for sometime make a show of being extremely friendly so as to throw us off our guard, and as the officers and sailors will be busy they may possibly relax their precautions a little. Now I propose that you and I shall constitute an amateur watch from sunrise to dark. After that the men's work will be done, and there will be no fear of their being taken by surprise. The real danger is, I think, in the daytime. Wilfrid and I will take the second mate's watch, and do you two take the first mate's—that is, if you agree to my proposal."

The three young fellows at once expressed their willingness to do as he directed them.

"During our respective watches," Mr. Atherton went on, "we must keep our attention directed solely to the natives. There must be no watching what is going on on board, no talking and laughing with the other passengers; we must consider ourselves as if on duty. One of us must take his place on the fo'castle, the other in the waist. The natives are sure to hang round the ship in

their canoes watching what we are doing, and offering things for sale. It will be our duty to keep a vigilant eye upon them, to watch every movement, to give instant warning if their number is at any time larger than usual, and, in fact, to prevent the possibility of their closing suddenly in upon us and taking us by surprise. Remember, it is a case of absolute duty; I have volunteered to the first officer to undertake it, and he will, relying upon our vigilance, give his attention to his work."

"Shall we be armed, Mr. Atherton?" James Allen asked.

"Yes, James, I think that it will be as well to have our guns beside us while on duty. Of course there is no occasion to have them on our shoulders like sentries, but it will be well to have them always within reach of the hand in case of sudden danger. The report of a musket would give the alarm far quicker and more effectually than a shout would do, especially if men are at work on deck and making a noise. Well, as you agree, we will begin after breakfast."

"How about meals, sir?" Tom Allen asked. "If they mean to make an attack I should think they would be likely to choose meal-time, when the passengers are all below and the deck will be comparatively deserted."

"We must keep watch then also," Mr. Atherton said decidedly. "I will speak to Mr. Ryan and ask him to tell the steward that two of us will require something put on the table for them after the others have done. I do not think that he himself is likely to leave the deck when the captain is below, and the two of us who happen to be on duty can have our meals when he does. Of course whenever those on duty come down for this purpose the others will take their places until they return. We will change about each day. This is supposed to be your watch,

Allen, from four to eight. Wilfrid and I will begin the work at that hour. You will relieve us at twelve, and we shall take the watch from four to eight. To-morrow we will take the early watch, and so on."

"I will tell the Grimstones," Wilfrid, who had always gone for a daily chat with the men forward, said; "they will be glad to join us in the watch, and I should think the other men forward would do so too. I know they all find it very hard work to get through the day."

The Grimstones at once agreed to keep watch, as did the other three men who occupied the fore cabin with them. Mr. Atherton got muskets and ammunition for them from Mr. Ryan, and the two Grimstones were appointed to his watch, the other men to that of the Allen's.

At seven bells most of the passengers came on deck to enjoy the fresh morning air for an hour before breakfast.

"You are not going to enjoy the pleasure of Wilfrid's or my company at breakfast, Mrs. Renshaw," Mr. Atherton said, smiling, to that lady as she stood with the three girls round her on the poop.

"Why not, Mr. Atherton?" she asked in surprise.

"He and the Allens and myself are going to do amateur sentry work as long as we lie here, Mrs. Renshaw. The crew will be all busy refitting the ship, and so I have volunteered to undertake, with their assistance, the duty of keeping a sharp eye on those tricky gentlemen ashore."

"Are you in earnest, Mr. Atherton?"

"Quite in earnest that we are going to do so, Mrs. Renshaw. There may be no absolute occasion for it, but there is nothing like keeping on the safe side; and as we cannot go ashore, and one cannot talk continuously for fifteen or sixteen hours, we may just as well pass a portion of our time in playing at sentinels."

"But when will you get breakfast?" Marion asked. "Shall I bring it up to you, Mr. Atherton?"

"No, thank you, Miss Renshaw. We have arranged to have it with Mr. Ryan afterward. I am much obliged to you for your offer just the same. It is a very kind one, especially since you will, for once, particularly enjoy your breakfast, as you will have room for your elbows."

"You are laughing at me again, Mr. Atherton. One would really think that you take me to be about ten years old."

"I think a little teasing does you good, Miss Renshaw. It is one of the privileges of us old fellows to try to do good to our young friends: and girls of your age lord it so over their brothers and their brother's friends that it is good for them to be teased a little by their elders."

"Would not you think, mother," Marion appealed, "that Mr. Atherton by his talk was somewhere about eighty and that I was quite a child?"

"I agree with him that it is rather a good thing for girls of your age, Marion, to be snubbed a little occasionally; especially on a voyage like this, when there are several young fellows on board who have nothing better to do than to wait upon you and humor your whims."

There was a general laugh. Before a fresh subject was started the breakfast-bell rang and the passengers went below. Mr. Atherton fetched his rifle from his cabin, and Wilfrid was going to unpack his double-barreled gun when his friend said: "I should not brother about that now, Wilfrd; take one of the ship's muskets. It will make just as much noise if you have to fire it, and you will not be alarming the passengers by bringing your gun backward and forward from your cabin. I am going to hang up my rifle when I come off guard in Ryan's cabin on deck, where it will be handy. You take

the fo'castle, your two men can be in the waist, one on each side, and I will take the poop. Just at present our duty will be a nominal one, as the canoes have not put out, but I expect they will be here before long."

Before breakfast was over, indeed, a large canoe was brought down from the woods and placed in the water, and a number of natives appeared on the shore. The first officer at once summoned the captain on deck.

"Tell all the men to have their arms handy, Mr. Ryan," the captain said as he looked at the gathering on shore. "I do not suppose they mean to attack us in this open way, still we may as well be upon our guard. Order the men not to show their arms, but to go about their work as usual. We do not wish to appear afraid of them, or to take up a position of hostility. I hope the chiefs are coming off for a friendly palaver."

In a few minutes the canoes put off from the shore. First came the great canoe, which was paddled by thirty men. In the bow and stern were hideous images. Four natives, evidently of superior rank were seated near the stern, and in the bow stood a man beating his hands in time to the stroke of the paddles and singing a song, which was responded to by a deep exclamation from the rowers at every stroke. Another man stood by the side of the singer waving a green bough. Behind this great canoe followed a score of smaller ones.

"We will receive them in state, Mr. Ryan. Evidently they intend to keep up an appearance of friendliness at present. We will meet them in the same spirit. Fasten the signal flags on to the halyards and run them up to the masthead, let half a dozen men with cutlasses take their place at the gangway as a sort of guard of honor, let the rest go on with their work but keep their arms handy for action."

When the great canoe approached the vessel the men stopped paddling, and one of the chiefs standing up made an address to the captain, who was standing at the top of the gangway. Not a word that he said was understood, but the address seemed to be of a friendly nature, and the chief held up some cocoanuts and yams as if to show his desire to trade. When he had finished the captain took off his hat and also spoke, and by gestures invited the chiefs to come on board. By this time all the passengers had come on deck, and were watching the proceedings with great interest.

"Do you think it safe to let them on board?" the first officer asked Mr. Atherton, who was intently watching the natives in the smaller canoes.

"Quite safe," he replied. "So long as only a few of their followers come with them there is no fear of their attempting anything. While the chiefs are in our hands they act, as it were, as hostages for the good conduct of their people. So far their intentions are clearly peaceful. Whether that will last will depend upon whether they think there is a chance of success or not. At present all we have to do is to take advantage of it, and to get what we want on board."

By this time the canoe was approaching the side of the ship. The four chiefs ascended the ladder, followed by four or five of lower rank who had been seated near them. As they reached the deck the principal chief turned round and shouted an order in a loud voice. Its effect was immediate. The canoe in which they had arrived at once paddled away to a short distance, while the smaller craft, which had before been drifting slowly toward the vessel, also retired and lay huddled behind the large canoe.

CHAPTER VII.

A SAVAGE SURPRISE.

The captain led the way on to the poop, the chiefs and the natives with them following, while the first officer with the six sailors with sabers kept in their rear. Once on the quarter-deck Mr. Ryan ranged three of the men by the bulwark on either side, telling them to sheath their cutlasses, but to be prepared for instant action in case of treachery. The chiefs preserved a stolid demeanor, scarce glancing at the passengers, who were gathered on the poop. At the captain's orders the steward brought up a number of cushions and placed them on the deck in a circle. The captain seated himself on one and motioned to the chiefs to follow his example, which they did without hesitation. Mr. Ryan now brought up a number of things as presents for the chiefs, and each was presented with a hand mirror, a roll of scarlet cloth, and some trinkets, as a small supply of these had been brought on board for trade with the natives in case of the necessity arising.

The head chief was in addition presented with an ax, and rolls of colored cotton strings of glass beads, and some brass rings were given to the inferior chiefs. The natives appeared pleased with their presents. The captain then addressed them, and endeavored to explain that he wanted a supply of water. An empty barrel was brought up and some water poured into this, and the captain then pointed to the shore, and by gestures inti-

mated that he wished the barrels to be taken ashore and filled. The chiefs evidently understood the explanation, and nodded their assent. The captain then led them to the stump of the mainmast, pointed to the shore, and taking an ax imitated the action of chopping, and showed that he wanted them to fell a tree and bring it off to the vessel. The chief pointed to the boats hanging on the davits, placed the ax in the hands of one of the men, and clearly signified that the crew could go ashore and cut down a tree if they chose. The captain shook his head and placed the ax in the hands of one of the chiefs. Their leader, however, went up to the foremast, and by spreading out his arms signified that it was a great size, and then held out the small ax the captain had presented to him with an action of disdain.

"The beggar means that with one ax they would never cut down a tree of that size," the first officer said.

"That is all humbug, Ryan; they can bring down the biggest trees for the construction of their canoes. I believe they bring them down by fire. However, it is as well to humor them. Tell the carpenter to bring half a dozen axes."

This was done and the axes laid down on the deck. There was now a consultation between the natives. After awhile they nodded, and then made signs that some one must go ashore with them to choose the tree.

"What do you say, Ryan?" the captain asked. "It is of importance that we should get a stick that will suit us. The question is whether it will be safe to trust a man on shore with these scoundrels?"

"I will go ashore if you like, captain," Mr. Ryan replied.

"I do not like it, Ryan," the captain said. "You see, they would make mincemeat of an armed crew in no time."

"I should not propose to take a crew, sir; they could afford no protection against a number of natives. I do not think the beggars would assault a single man. You see, there would be nothing to gain by it; and if they did it would put the ship on its guard, and their game at present is evidently to be friendly. I do not think there is any danger in the affair. If I did not go they might send off some stick that would be no use at all to us, and as we came in on purpose to get a mast it is worth while risking something."

"Well, Ryan," the captain said after a moment's deliberation, "I think perhaps you are right, and that one man would be safe with them. It is certainly of great importance for us to get the sort of stick we want, so as you are ready to volunteer I do not think myself justified in refusing your offer." The captain then put his hand on the chief officer's shoulder and intimated to the natives that he would accompany them on shore. The party then returned to the poop, and the steward brought up some tumblers and two or three bottles of rum. The chief's eyes glistened as the liquor was poured out, and each swallowed a half tumbler of the spirit with an air of the deepest satisfaction.

"That is the present they like best," the captain said; "and I suppose I had better give them some for consumption on shore. At any rate it will keep them in a good temper until Ryan is back again." Accordingly two bottles of rum were presented to the leading chief, a bottle to the next three in rank, and two or three bottles among the others. The great canoe was hailed, the natives again took their places in it, accompanied by the first officer, and the boat then started for the shore. Some of the smaller craft now came alongside, and the process of barter was again commenced. Yams, bread-

fruit, and other products of the island were obtained for the use of the ship in exchange for beads, empty bottles, and small mirrors, while the passengers succeeded in obtaining many curiously carved weapons, calabashes, woven cloths, and other mementos of their visit. Only two or three of the canoes were allowed alongside at a time, and a vigilant lookout was maintained to see that others did not approach the ship. The captain walked restlessly up and down the poop, constantly turning his glass upon the shore.

An hour after the great canoe had reached it he exclaimed in a tone of intense satisfaction, "There is Ryan coming down to the beach. Thank heaven he is safe!" The first mate was seen to take his place in a small canoe, which at once rowed off to the ship. The captain shook him heartily by the hand as he stepped on deck. "Thank heaven you have got back safely, Ryan! it has been a hazardous business, and I shall take care to let the owners know how you have risked your life by going ashore in their service. Well, how have you succeeded?"

"I found a grand pine growing within thirty or forty yards of the water, about a quarter of a mile beyond that point to the left. As I expected, the natives had no idea of using the axes for such a purpose. When I left them a party were piling wood round the foot of the tree, and I have no doubt they will soon get it down in their own way. I suppose they will waste ten or twelve feet at the base, but that is of no consequence, for the tree is long enough and to spare to make us a fair-sized mainmast."

"That is right; and as it is so close to the water we can send a boat to see how they are getting on. How about water?"

"They showed me a spring about fifty yards from the beach, nearly facing us. There is plenty of water there,

and it is perfectly fresh and sweet, for I tasted it. If they make any bother about bringing it off, a couple of boats with well-armed parties could fetch it without difficulty as the distance is so short."

"That is capital, Ryan. I hope our difficulties are pretty well over, and that we shall get off without any trouble with these fellows."

"I hope so, sir. They certainly seemed friendly enough with me on shore."

In the evening Mr. Ryan, with a crew of six men, went in the captain's gig to see how the natives were getting on with the tree. The men had their muskets and cutlasses laid under the thwarts in readiness for action. The natives, however, appeared perfectly friendly. The crews of several of the canoes near which they passed shouted some sort of greeting, but paid no other attention to them. On rounding the point the first officer steered straight for the tree he had chosen. A light smoke was ascending from its foot, and half a dozen natives were gathered there. When close to the spot he ordered the men to turn the boat round and back her ashore.

"I am going to land, lads," he said, "and see how they are getting on. I do not think that there is the least danger, but you had best keep in readiness to row off the instant I jump on board."

Mr. Ryan then proceeded to the tree. He found that a circle of small fires had been built against it. These were fed with dry wood, and were slowly but steadily eating their way into the tree, and he saw that only two or three feet of the base would be injured by their action. He nodded approvingly to the natives, but muttered to himself: "It's a mighty slow way of bringing down a tree. It is not much above three and a half feet in

diameter, even at the base, and a couple of men with axes would bring it down in an hour, while there is no saying how long they will be with these fires of theirs. However, I should say that they will get through it to-night or some time to-morrow. It is a fine stick, and runs up as straight as an arrow, and is thick enough for fifty feet for our purpose."

He walked quietly back to the boat, took his seat, and was rowed back to the ship, where he reported that the natives were carrying out their promise, and that by the next day the tree would be down. On visiting the spot again on the following morning it was found that the tree had fallen.

"The fellows know their business," Mr. Ryan said to the man who rowed the stroke-oar. "You see that they managed so that it should fall toward the water. Now, lads, you can take to the axes we have brought with us and chop it through at the point where we want it cut; it will save the trouble of getting off the upper branches, and render it much more handy for getting afloat."

Leaving two of the men in the boat, Mr. Ryan and the other four leaped ashore, and were not long in cutting through the tree. Another half-hour sufficed to lop off all the branches below this point, and the trunk was then ready for launching. The natives stood round watching the work with exclamations of surprise at the speed with which the keen axes did their work. Mr. Ryan had brought with him from the ship a number of presents, and these he distributed among the party who had been engaged in felling the tree.

"I do not know," he said to the captain when he returned, "whether they mean to get the stick in the water and bring it here, or whether they expect we shall do that part of the business ourselves."

"I think we will wait until to-morrow morning, Mr. Ryan. If we hear nothing of them by then you had better take two boats—one with men to do the work, the other to lie just off and protect them while they do it."

There was, however, no occasion for this, for early the next morning seven or eight canoes were seen coming round the point with much beating of tomtoms and sounding of conch horns.

"Here comes the spar!" the captain exclaimed; "the worst of our difficulties is over, thank goodness!"

"I would keep an eye open, Ryan, if I were you," Mr. Atherton said as the mate passed him to give orders for preparing to get the spar on deck. "There are a good many other canoes coming off from the shore, and they might take the opportunity for making a sudden attack."

"Right you are," the mate said. "Let the starboard watch," he shouted, "keep their arms handy! Four men with muskets take their place at the top of the gangway, but do not show the arms unless you get orders to do so!"

The trunk was towed alongside the ship. Mr. Atherton and the party who had placed themselves under his orders kept a vigilant watch on the canoes to see if the occupants were armed. There was a deal of talking and gesticulating going on among them, but no arms could be seen, and Mr. Atherton soon concluded that if treachery was intended the present was not the time at which it would be shown. The crew were all on deck, and the natives must have known their arms were close at hand, for each day a few of those who came to trade had been permitted to come on deck, partly to show confidence on the part of those on board, partly that the visitors might see the arms lying in readiness for use, and be able to report on shore that the ship was not to be taken by surprise.

No sooner was the spar alongside than a couple of sailors lowered themselves down and passed ropes round it. These ropes were then passed through blocks and taken to the capstan. The bars were fitted and seized by a dozen men. The boatswain's whistle sounded, and starting their anchor song the men tramped round and round, the ropes tightened, and the heavy spar was parbuckled up on to the deck. No sooner was it got on board than the four chiefs who had before visited the ship came alongside. There was another talk, and they were presented with a considerable number of presents for themselves and followers as a reward for their service in sending off the spar. Mr. Atherton and Wilfrid did not approach the group of passengers round the chiefs, keeping their attention vigilantly upon the boats, from which the danger, if it existed, would come.

The Allens, however, in accordance with Mr. Atherton's instructions, watched the natives closely, and noticed as they came on deck they cast quick and scrutinizing glances round them as if to see what were the chances of a surprise. Mr. Ryan however, had, when he saw the great canoe approaching, placed ten men with muskets on guard, and the chiefs doubtless perceived that a surprise could not be effected. After a stay of about a quarter of an hour the chiefs departed with their presents, of which, by the care they took of it, it was evident that they considered a case of rum to be by far the most precious. No sooner was the trunk of the pine fairly on board than a gang of men provided with adzes began, under the direction of the carpenter, to prepare it. The bark was chipped off, the stumps of the branches shaved close, and they then began to chip it down to the required thickness from end to end.

"It will make a fine spar," the captain said in a tone

of great satisfaction, after he had examined it. "I think it will do for her permanent mast. If it will it will save us a lot of trouble when we get into Wellington."

"I think it will be a little light, sir," Mr. Ryan said, "by the time we have got it perfectly smooth and even. Still, I have seen lighter spars in a ship of this size, and I certainly think we are most fortunate in getting such a stick. When do you think you will get it ready, Watson?"

"I should say we shall have it nearly ready for getting into its place by to-morrow night, Mr. Ryan," the carpenter replied, "though we may not quite finish it until next day; for, you see, when it comes to getting it smoothed, I and my mate must do it by ourselves."

"I should not be particular about smoothing it," the captain said, "but of course you must make it so that it will take the spare irons we have got for the topmast. We shall have plenty of time to put the finishing touches to it when we get to Wellington. I begin to think these natives are not so black as they are painted, Mr. Ryan."

"Perhaps not, sir; but maybe if they had not seen that we were so ready for them there would be a different tale to tell."

"That is so," the captain agreed. "There is no doubt that the best way of dealing with natives is never to give them a chance."

The carpenter's gang continued steadily at their work, while the first officer got up the sheer-legs and hoisted the stump of the mainmast from its place. The butt of the new mainmast was cut to match this, and on the second day after it arrived alongside it was hoisted into its position. The whole of the stays and rigging of the mainmast had been cut away as soon as it went overboard; but there was plenty of spare rope on board, and

before evening the new mast was firmly stayed in its place, and all was in readiness for hoisting the spar that was to serve as topmast.

The natives had watched the proceedings with great interest. Quite a crowd of canoes gathered round the ship, and were greatly surprised at seeing the heavy spar raised by the sheers and dropped into its place; and they replied to the hearty cheers that rose from the crew and passengers when this was accomplished by wild yells and cries and the sounding of their horns.

"I begin to think," the captain said to Mr. Atherton, "that the natives have got a worse name than they deserve. I do not mean of course, that they have not perpetrated several atrocious massacres, but I expect these must have been the result of extreme carelessness on the part of those on ships, or perhaps of rough treatment, for some captains treat the natives of islands like these like dogs. As far as they could have told there was an excellent chance of attacking the ship to-day, though we know that we kept up a vigilant watch all the time, and yet nothing could have been more friendly than they were."

"There is no doubt something in what you say, captain," Mr. Atherton agreed. "Many of the captains of the ships who trade among these islands are certainly rough fellows, who would think nothing of knocking a native down, and others again are so culpably careless as to offer almost an inducement to the natives to grasp what is to them untold wealth. Still I think it is as well to be cautious."

"Of course we shall be cautious" the captain replied; "but I really do not think that you and the others need bother yourselves to be always standing on sentry."

"It is no trouble" Mr. Atherton said "and I think we will keep it up until we are fairly under way."

Mr. Atherton was not pleased at seeing that the captain the next day relaxed somewhat in the strictness of the rules he laid down, and the crew were allowed to trade freely with the natives.

"We must be more vigilant than ever," he said to Wilfrid and the Allens. "The captain is so pleased at having got his mast on board that he is disposed to view the natives with friendly eyes, which, if they mean treachery, is just what they want. Finding that we were too much on the watch to be taken by surprise, they would naturally try to lull us with a sense of false security."

In the afternoon the chief again came off and formally invited the captain to a feast on shore. He accepted the invitation, and went back with them, accompanied by three or four of the passengers who had scoffed at the idea of danger. After a stay of two or three hours they returned on board.

"I think, Mr. Ryan," the captain said that evening, "you had better take a couple of boats in the morning and go ashore for water. We shall have everything ready for getting up our anchor after dinner. Of course, your crew will be well armed and take every precaution, but I do not think that there is the slightest danger."

"Very well, sir. You may be sure I will keep my weather-eye open."

Mr. Atherton shook his head when in the morning he saw the boats being lowered and heard from the first officer the orders he had received.

"From what you say there is water enough to last us to Wellington if we are all put on somewhat shorter allowance, and that would be infinitely better than running the risk of your going ashore."

"The water might last if all goes well," the mate said, "but if we were to get becalmed for some time, which

is likely enough in these latitudes, we should be in an awkward fix. I shall keep a sharp lookout on shore, never fear. The distance to the spring is, as I told you, not above fifty yards, and I will keep half the men filling and the other half on guard. If they should mean mischief we will give it them hot."

"How many men will you take?"

"Sixteen—ten in the cutter and six in the gig."

"That would only leave us ten on board," Mr. Atherton said. "If they attack you they will attack us too, that is a moral certainty. At any rate, I will hint to some of the passengers that they had better keep their arms in readiness while you are away."

Mr. Atherton refused to go down to breakfast when the Allens came up to relieve him after finishing their meal.

"We will have both watches on deck this morning," he said. "We shall be very shorthanded while Ryan and his party are away. Unfortunately the captain is convinced there is not the slightest danger. He snubbed me this morning quite smartly when I said casually that I supposed that he would not let any of the natives on board while Ryan was away."

As the rest of the passengers came from breakfast, Mr. Atherton spoke to some of those with whom he had been most intimate on the voyage, and told them that he thought it would be just as well for them to bring their arms on deck and keep them close at hand until the watering party returned.

"It is no great trouble," he said, "and it is just as well to be ready in case the natives mean mischief. I know that some of the youngsters consider me to be an alarmist, and I will give them free leave to laugh at me when we are once safely out at sea, but the stake is too

heavy to admit of carelessness; there are not only our own lives but those of the ladies to be thought of."

Three or four of the passengers followed this advice and brought their muskets or double-barreled guns on deck. They were a good deal laughed at by the rest, who asked them if they had joined Atherton's army, as the little party who had kept watch were called. However, when the boats pushed off with the empty casks, and the passengers saw how large was the complement of the crew who had left them, three of the others strolled down to the cabin and got their guns. In half an hour the great canoe with the chiefs came off, and as it approached the ship Mr. Atherton told Wilfrid to go forward, and tell the five men there to come aft and be in readiness to mount to the poop the moment they saw any sign of trouble. "If there is a row," he said, "we have to hold the poop. There are only the two ladders to defend, and we can do that; but it would be useless to try to hold the whole of the ship."

As the captain left the poop and went down into the waist to receive the chiefs, Mr. Atherton went up to where Mrs. Renshaw was sitting.

"Will you take my advice, Mrs. Renshaw?"

"Certainly, I will," she said, smiling; "for I am sure it will be good, whatever it is."

"Then, Mrs. Renshaw, I advise you at once to go below with your daughter and the Miss Mitfords. I do not say that we are going to have trouble, but if we are this is the time. Pray oblige me by doing as I ask."

Mrs. Renshaw at once rose, called Marion and the other two girls, who were gayly chatting with a group of the passengers, and asked them to go below with her. Wilfrid and the two Allens were now on the poop, as Mr. Atherton had told them that they had better remain there

instead of placing themselves at other points. The Grimstones and the three other passengers forward were gathered near the ladders.

As usual the chiefs accompanied the captain on to the poop, followed by half a dozen of the minor chiefs; and Mr. Atherton noticed that several of the others, instead of sitting quietly in the canoe, slipped up after them on to the deck. The flotilla of small canoes, which had as usual put out in the train of the large one, was edging in toward the vessel. Mr. Atherton leaned over the poop rail and spoke to the second officer, who was engaged in the waist with the men.

"Mr. Rawlins, I do not quite like the look of things. I think that it would be as well if you were to gather as many of the hands as you can at the foot of the ladder here, without, of course, alarming the natives, as it may be only my fancy."

The second mate nodded, and at once told the men with him to knock off from their work. "Get hold of your cutlasses quietly," he said, "and gather near the foot of the starboard port ladder." Then going to the gangway he stopped a native who was just climbing up from the canoe, and motioned to them that no more were to come on board.

The talk with the chiefs was a short one. The stewards brought up two cases of rum, and when these were handed over to them the natives rose as if to go. Suddenly the leader drew his ax from his girdle, and with a loud yell buried it deep in the captain's head.

The yell was echoed from some hundred throats, the crew of the canoe leaped to their feet and began to clamber up the side of the vessel, while those in the smaller craft dashed their paddles into the water and urged their boats toward it. At the same moment the natives on

board all drew concealed weapons. So quick had been the action of the chief that Mr. Atherton had not time to prevent it, but before the body of the captain touched the deck that of the chief was stretched beside it with a bullet through the brain.

Wilfrid and the Allens seeing the natives rise to go had thought the danger over, and two passengers had been struck down before they brought their rifles to their shoulders. They were within a few feet of the chiefs, and each of their shots told. For a minute or two there was a scene of wild confusion. The natives in the waist fell furiously upon the sailors, but these, fortunately put upon their guard, received the attack with determination. The sound of the lads' rifles was followed almost instantly by the sharp cracks of a revolver Mr. Atherton produced from his pocket, and each shot told with fatal effect. When the revolver was empty not a native remained alive on the poop.

The other passengers had been taken so completely by surprise that even those who had brought up their arms did not join in the fray until the poop was cleared. "Keep them back there!" Mr. Atherton shouted as the natives came swarming up the ladder on the port side. Several shots were fired, but the passengers were too startled for their aim to be true.

"Give me your musket, Renshaw!" Mr. Atherton exclaimed, snatching the piece the latter had just discharged from his hands, "my rifle is too good for this work." He then clubbed the weapon, and whirling it round his head as if it had been a straw, fell upon the natives, who were just pouring up on to the poop, shouting to the passengers, "Fire on the mass below! I will keep these fellows at bay!" Every blow that fell stretched a man lifeless on deck, until those who had

gained the poop, unable to retreat owing to the pressure of those behind them, and terrified by the destruction wrought by this giant, sprang over the bulwark into the sea. Just as they did so the little party of sailors and steerage passengers, finding themselves unable to resist the pressure, made their way up to the poop by the starboard ladder, hotly pressed by the natives.

By this time several of the male passengers who had rushed below for their weapons ran up, and Wilfrid and the Allens having reloaded, such a discharge was poured into the natives on the port ladder that the survivors leaped down on to the deck below, and the attack for a moment ceased. The whole of the forward portion of the ship was by this time in the hands of the natives. Three sailors who were at work there had been at once murdered, only one of the party having time to make his escape up the fore-rigging. Spears now began to fly fast over the poop.

"We must fall back a bit, Mr. Rawlins, or we shall be riddled," Mr. Atherton said. "Your men had better run down and get muskets; we will keep these fellows at bay. I do not think they will make a rush again just at present. Will you see that the door leading out on to the waist is securely barricaded, and place two or three men there? Mr. Renshaw, will you and some of the other passengers carry down those ladies who have fainted, and assure them all that the danger is really over."

Mr. Atherton had so naturally taken the command that the second mate at once obeyed his instructions. Most of the ladies had rushed below directly the fray began, but two or three had fainted, and these were soon carried below. The male passengers, eighteen in all, were now on deck. Several of them looked very pale and scared,

but even the most timid felt that his life depended on his making a fight for it. A perfect shower of spears were now flying over the poop from the natives in the canoes alongside, and from the ship forward.

"We had best lie down, gentlemen," Mr. Atherton said. "If the natives make a rush up the ladders we must be careful not to fire all at once or we should be at their mercy. Let those by the bulwarks fire first, and the others take it up gradually while the first reload. Of course if they make a really determined rush there will be nothing to do but to meet them and drive them back again."

Unfortunately the four cannon of the Flying Scud were all amidships, and were therefore not available for the defense.

"If we could make a breastwork, Mr. Atherton, so that we could stand up behind it and fire down into the waist we might drive these fellows out," the second officer suggested.

"A very good idea. Wilfrid, will you run down and ask the ladies to get up to the top of the companion all the mattresses, trunks, and other things that would do to form a barricade? It will be a good thing for them to have something to do. Mr. Rawlins, will you send down the stewards to help? they might get some cases and barrels up. As fast as they bring them up we will push them along the deck and form a breastwork."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE END OF THE VOYAGE.

When Wilfrid went below to get materials for a barricade he found the ladies kneeling or sitting calm and quiet, although very pale and white, round the table, while Mrs. Renshaw was praying aloud. She concluded her prayer just as he came down. There was a general chorus of questions.

"Everything is going on well," Wilfrid said cheerfully; "but we want to make a breastwork, for the spears are flying about so one cannot stand up to fire at them. I have come to ask you all to carry up mattresses and pillows and cushions and portmanteaus, and everything else that will make a barricade. The stewards will open the lazaret and send up barrels and things. Please set to work at once."

Not a moment was lost; the ladies carried the things rapidly up the companion, two of the passengers passed them outside, and others lying in a line pushed them forward from one to another until they arrived at those lying, rifle in hand, twenty feet aft of the poop rails. There was soon a line of mattresses four deep laid across the deck.

"That will do to begin with," Mr. Atherton said. "Now, let us push these before us to the end of the poop, and we can then commence operations. The sailors, Wilfrid Renshaw, the Allens, and myself will first open fire. Will the rest of you please continue to pass things

along to add to the height of our barricade? I wish we knew how they are getting on on shore." For almost immediately after the struggle had begun on board the sound of musketry had broken out from that quarter, and they knew that the watering party had been attacked directly the natives knew that their chiefs had commenced the massacre on board ship.

Several times, in spite of the danger from the flying spears, Mr. Atherton had gone to the stern and looked toward the shore. The boats lay there seemingly deserted, and the fight was going on in the wood. A number of canoes had placed themselves so as to cut off the return of the boats should the sailors succeed in making their way to them.

As soon as the line of mattresses was pushed forward to the edge of the poop a steady fire was opened upon the natives who had already taken off the hatches, and were engaged in bringing their plunder up on deck, deferring the dangerous operation of carrying the poop for the present.

As soon, however, as the fire opened upon them they seized their spears and tomahawks, and, led by one of their chiefs, made a rush at the two poop ladders. Mr. Atherton gave a shout, and the whole of the passengers seizing their muskets, sprang to their feet and ran forward to the barricade, and so heavy a fire was poured into the natives as they tried to ascend the ladders that they fell back again and contented themselves with replying to the fire with volleys of spears. The passengers at once renewed their work of passing the materials for the barricade forward, and this was continued until it rose breast-high. They then took their places closely together behind it, and joined its defenders in keeping up a heavy fire upon the natives. So deadly was its

effect that the latter began to lose heart and to jump over into the canoes alongside.

A cheer broke from the passengers as they saw the movement of retreat. It was no longer necessary for any to reserve their fire, and this was redoubled. The natives were discouraged by the want of leaders; their principal chiefs had all been killed on the poop, and any other who attempted to rally them and lead them again to an attack was instantly shot down by Mr. Atherton, who, as Wilfrid, who was standing next to him observed, never once failed to bring down the man he aimed at."

"I think we might get at them, sir, now," the second officer said to Mr. Atherton; "the fight is all out of them."

"I think so too, Rawlins. Now, gentlemen, give them one last volley and then pull down the barricade across the ends of the ladders and charge them." The volley was given, and then with a ringing cheer the barricade was thrust aside, and led on one side by Mr. Atherton and on the other by the second officer, the defenders of the poop sprang down the ladders and rushed forward. The natives did not stop to await them, but sprang overboard with the greatest precipitation, and the Flying Scud was once again in the hands of its lawful owners.

"Now, Rawlins, do you and the sailors work the guns; we will pepper them with our rifles," Mr. Atherton said. "Mr. Renshaw, will you go aft and tell the ladies that all is over?"

But this they had already learned. Marion, after the things had been passed up, had taken her place at the top of the companion, occasionally peering out to see what was going on, and running down with the news to them below, and as the loud cheer which preceded the charge had broken from those on deck, she had called

out to the ladies below that the natives were beaten. The shower of spears from the boats had ceased as soon as the natives saw their friends leaping overboard, and as Mr. Renshaw ascended the poop to deliver the message the ladies were flocking out on deck, each anxious to ascertain whether those most dear to them had suffered in the fray. Marion ran forward and threw herself into his arms.

"Not hurt, father?"

"No, my dear, thank God. Some of us have got spear wounds more or less awkward, but nobody has been killed except those who were struck down at the beginning." As he spoke the four cannon boomed out one after another, for they had been loaded some days before, and a hail of bullets and pieces of iron with which they had been crammed tore through the canoes, while terrible yells rose from the natives. Three of the canoes were instantly sunk, and half the paddlers in the large boat of the chief were killed or disabled. Almost the same instant a dropping fire of musketry was opened, the passengers firing as soon as they had reloaded their pieces.

"Give another dose to that big fellow!" the second officer shouted to the men at the two guns at that side of the ship. "Shove a ball in, men, and a bagful of bullets —take steady aim, and remember the poor captain!" A minute later the guns were fired. A terrible cry was heard, and almost instantaneously the great canoe disappeared below the water.

"Get the other two guns over to this side," Mr. Rawlins said; "we must lend a hand now to the party ashore. Load all the guns with grape, and aim at those canoes between us and them." These, following the example of those around the ship, were already moving toward the

shore, and the discharge of the four guns sank two of them and sent the others off in headlong flight.

"What had we better do now, Mr. Atherton?"

"I should load with round shot now, Rawlins, and open fire into the wood on both sides of the landing-place. The sound of the shot crashing among the trees will demoralize the scoundrels even if you do not hit any one."

Three or four rounds were fired, and then those on board gave a cheer as they saw the sailors issue out from among the trees and take their places in the boats. Half a minute later they were rowing toward the vessel, unmolested by the natives. Mr. Ryan stood up in the stern of his boat as soon as they were within hailing distance and shouted—"How has it gone with you?"

"We have beaten them off, as you see," the second officer shouted back; "but the ship was pretty nearly in their hands for a time. The captain is killed, I am sorry to say; four of our men, and two of the passengers. How have you done?"

"We have lost three men," Mr. Ryan replied, "and most of us are wounded."

The boats were soon alongside, and Mr. Ryan, after hearing what had taken place on board, related his experience. "We had got about half the casks filled when we heard a rifle shot on board the ship, followed directly by the yells of the black divils. I ordered the men to drop the casks and take to their guns, but I had scarcely spoken when a volley of spears fell among us. Two men were killed at once. I had intended to take to the boats and come off to lend you a hand, but by the yelling and the shower of spears I saw that the spalpeens were so thick round us that if we had tried we should pretty well all be killed before we could get fairly out, so I told the

men to take to the trees and keep up a steady fire whenever the natives tried to make a rush at us. I was, of course, terribly anxious about you all at first, and I knew that if the ship was taken they must have us all sooner or later. After the first few shots there was silence for a time, and I feared the worst."

"The spears were flying so thick we could not stand up to fire," the second officer put in.

"Ah! that was it. Well, I was afraid you had all been massacred, and you may imagine how relieved I was when I heard a dropping fire of musketry begin; I knew then that they had failed to take you by surprise. The fire at last got so heavy I was sure that most of you had escaped the first attack, and we then felt pretty hopeful, though I did not see how we were to get down to the boats and get off to you. When we heard the first cannon shot we gave a cheer that must have astonished the natives, for we knew you must have cleared the deck of the scoundrels. I had set a man at the edge of the trees by the water to let us know how you were going on, and he soon shouted that the canoes were drawing off. Then we heard the big canoe was sunk, and that you had driven off the craft that were lying between us and the ship. A minute later the round shot came crashing among the trees, and almost immediately the yelling round us ceased, and we felt sure they must be drawing off. We waited until you had fired a couple more rounds, and then as all seemed quiet we fell back to the boats, and, as you saw, got off without a single spear being thrown at us. I am awfully sorry for the poor captain. If he had but taken your advice, Mr. Atherton, all this would not have happened; but at last he got to trust these treacherous scoundrels, and this is the result."

"Well, Mr. Ryan, you are in command now," Mr. Atherton said, "and we are all ready to carry out any orders that you will give us."

"First of all then, Mr. Atherton, I must in the name of the owners of this ship, of myself, the officers and crew, thank you for having saved it and us from the hands of these savages. From what Mr. Rawlins tells me, and from what I know myself, I am convinced that had it not been for your vigilance, and for the part you have taken in the defense of the ship, the natives would have succeeded in their treacherous design of massacring all on board almost without resistance."

A cheer broke from the passengers and crew, and Mr. Renshaw said, when it had subsided: "I, on the part of the passengers, indorse all that Mr. Ryan has said; we owe it to you, Atherton, that by God's mercy we and those dear to us have escaped from death at the hands of these savages. It was you who put some of us on our guard; it was your marvelous shooting with the revolver that first cleared the poop; and your extraordinary strength that enabled you single-handed to check the onslaught of the natives and give us time to rally from our first surprise, and saved the ship and us."

"Do not let us say anything more about it," Mr. Atherton said; "we have all done our duty to the best of our power, and have reason to be heartily thankful to God that we have got out of this scrape without heavier loss than has befallen us. Now, Mr. Ryan, please give your orders."

"The first thing, undoubtedly, is to clear the deck of these bodies," Mr. Ryan said.

"What about the wounded?" Mr. Renshaw asked, "no doubt some of the poor wretches are still alive."

"They do not deserve any better fate than to be tossed

overboard with the others; still as that would go against the grain, we will see what we can do." He looked over the side. "There is a good-sized canoe floating there fifty yards away. I suppose the fellows thought it would be safer to jump overboard and swim ashore. Four of you men get out the gig and tow the canoe alongside. We will put any wounded we find into it and send it adrift; they will come out and pick it up after we are fairly off."

The bodies of sixty natives who had been killed outright were thrown overboard, and eighteen who were found to be still alive were lowered into the canoe. "I do not think we are really doing them much kindness, though of course we are doing the best we can for them," Mr. Atherton said to Mr. Renshaw. "I doubt if one of them will live. You see, all who were able to drag themselves to the side jumped overboard, and were either drowned or hauled into the canoes."

As soon as the operation was over the casks of water were got on board and the boats hoisted to the davits. The anchor was then hove up and some of the sails shaken out, and with a gentle breeze the vessel began to draw off the land. As soon as this was done all hands set to work washing down the decks; and in two or three hours, except for the bullet marks on the deck and bulwarks, there were no signs left of the desperate conflict that had raged on board the Flying Scud. At sunset all hands gathered on the poop, and the bodies of the captain and two passengers, and of the sailors who had fallen, were reverently delivered to the deep, Mr. Ryan reading the funeral service.

The ladies had retired below after the boats had come alongside, and did not come up until all was ready for the funeral. Mrs. Renshaw and three or four of the

others had been employed in dressing the wounds of those who had been injured. Four out of the six sailors who had survived the massacre on board had been more or less severely wounded before they won their way on the quarter-deck, and six of the watering party were also wounded. Eight of the passengers had been struck with the flying spears; but only two of these had received wounds likely to cause anxiety. After the funeral was over more sail was hoisted, the breeze freshened, and the Flying Scud proceeded briskly on her way.

The rest of the voyage was uneventful. Thankful as all were for their escape, a gloom hung over the ship. The death of the captain was much felt by all. He had been uniformly kind and obliging to the passengers, and had done everything in his power to make the voyage a pleasant one. One of the passengers who was killed was a young man with none on board to mourn him, but the other had left a widow and two children, whose presence in their midst was a constant reminder of their narrow escape from destruction.

The voyage had produced a very marked change in Mr. Renshaw. It had brought him in far closer connection with his children than he had ever been before, with results advantageous to each. Hitherto they had scarcely ever seen him except at meals, and even at these times his thoughts were so wholly taken up with the writings on which he was engaged that he had taken but little part in the general conversation beyond giving a willing assent to any request they made, and evincing no interest whatever in their plans and amusements.

Now, although for four or five hours a day he worked diligently at his study of the Maori language, he was at other times ready to join in what was going on. He often walked the deck by the hour with Wilfrid and

Marion, and in that time learned far more of their past life, of their acquaintances and amusements at their old home, than he had ever known before. He was genial and chatty with all the other passengers, and the astonishment of his children was unbounded when he began to take a lively part in the various amusements by which the passengers whiled away the long hours, and played at deck quoits and bull. The latter game consists of a board divided into twelve squares, numbered one to ten, with two having bulls' heads upon them; leaden disks covered with canvas are thrown on to this board, counting according to the number on which they fall, ten being lost for each quoit lodged on a square marked by a bull's head.

On the evening of the day before the shores of New Zealand came in sight Mr. Renshaw was sitting by his wife. "The voyage is just finished, Helen," he said. "It has been a pleasant time. I am sorry it is over."

"A very pleasant time, Alfred," she replied, "one of the most pleasant I have ever spent."

"I see now," he went on, "that I have made a mistake of my life, and instead of making an amusement of my hobby for archæology have thrown away everything for it. I have been worse than selfish. I have utterly neglected you and the children. Why, I seem only to have made an acquaintance with them since we came on board ship. I see now, dear, that I have broken my marriage vows to you. I have always loved you and always honored you, but I have altogether failed to cherish you."

"You have always been good and kind, Alfred," she said softly.

"A man may be good and kind to a dog, Helen; but that is not all that a wife has a right to expect. I see

now that I have blundered miserably. I cannot change my nature altogether, dear; that is too late. I cannot develop a fund of energy by merely wishing for it; but I can make the happiness of my wife and children my first thought and object, and my own pursuits the second. I thought the loss of our money was a terrible misfortune. I do not think so now. I feel that I have got my wife again and have gained two children, and whatever comes of our venture here I shall feel that the failure of the bank has brought undeserved happiness to me."

"And to me also," Mrs. Renshaw said softly as she pressed her husband's hand. "I feel sure that we shall all be happier than we have ever been before. Not that we have been unhappy, dear, very far from it; still, you have not been our life and center, and it has been so different since the voyage began."

"He is not half a bad fellow, after all," Mr. Atherton said, as leaning against the bulwark smoking his cigar he had glanced across at the husband and wife seated next to each other talking in low tones, and evidently seeing nothing of what was passing around them. "He has brightened up wonderfully since we started. Of course, he will never be a strong man, and is no more fit for a settler's life than he is for a habitation in the moon. Still, he is getting more like other people. His thoughts are no longer two or three thousand years back. He has become a sociable and pleasant fellow, and I am sure he is very fond of his wife and children. It is a pity he has not more backbone. Still, I think the general outlook is better than I expected. Taking it altogether, it has been as pleasant a voyage as I have ever made. There is the satisfaction too that one may see something of one's fellow-passengers after we land. This northern island is not, after all, such a very big place. That is

the worst of homeward voyages. People who get to know and like each other when they arrive in port scatter like a bombshell in every direction, and the chances are against your ever running up against any of them afterward."

Somewhat similar ideas occupied the minds of most of the passengers that evening. The voyage had been a pleasant one, and they were almost sorry that it was over; but there was a pleasurable excitement at the thought that they should next day see the land that was to be their home, and the knowledge that they should all be staying for a few days at Wellington seemed to postpone the break-up of their party for some little time.

No sooner was the anchor dropped than a number of shore boats came off to the ship. Those who had friends on shore and were expecting to be met watched anxiously for a familiar face, and a cry of delight broke from the two Mitfords as they saw their father and mother in one of these boats. After the first joyful greeting was over the happy little party retired to the cabin, where they could chat together undisturbed, as all the passengers were on deck. Half an hour later they returned to the deck, and the girls led their father and mother up to Mrs. Renshaw.

"I have to thank you most heartily, Mrs. Renshaw, for your great kindness to my girls. They tell me that you have throughout the voyage looked after them as if they had been your own daughters."

"There was no looking after required, I can assure you," Mrs. Renshaw said. "I was very pleased, indeed, to have them in what I may call our little party, and it was a great advantage and pleasure to my own girl."

"We are going ashore at once," Mr. Mitford said. "My girls tell me that you have no acquaintances here.

My own place is hundreds of miles away, and we are staying with some friends while waiting the arrival of the ship, and therefore cannot, I am sorry to say, put you up; but in any other way in which we can be of assistance we shall be delighted to give any aid in our power. The girls say you are thinking of making this your headquarters until you decide upon the district in which you mean to settle. In that case it will, of course, be much better for you to take a house, or part of a house, than to stop at an hotel; and if so it will be best to settle upon one at once, so as to go straight to it and avoid all the expenses of moving twice. It is probable that our friends, the Jacksons, may know of some suitable place, but if not I shall be glad to act as your guide in house-hunting."

Mr. Renshaw here came up and was introduced to Mr. Mitford, who repeated his offer.

"We shall be extremely glad," Mr. Renshaw replied; "though I really think that it is most unfair to take you even for a moment from your girls after an absence of five years."

"Oh, never mind that," Mr. Mitford said; "we shall land at once, and shall have all the morning to talk with them. If you and Mrs. Renshaw will come ashore at four o'clock in the afternoon my wife and I will meet you at the landing-place. Or if, as I suppose you would prefer to do, you like to land this morning and have a look at Wellington for yourselves, this is our address, and if you will call at two o'clock, or any time later, we shall be at your service. I would suggest, though, that if you do land early, you should first come round to us, because Jackson may know some place to suit you; and if not, I am sure that he will be glad to accompany you and act as your guide."

"I should not like to trouble—" Mr. Renshaw began.

"My dear sir, you do not know the country. Every one is glad to help a new chum—that is the name for fresh arrivals—to the utmost of his power if he knows anything whatever about him, and no one thinks anything of trouble."

"In that case," Mr. Renshaw said, smiling, "we will gladly avail ourselves of the offer. We should all have been contented if the voyage had lasted a month longer; but being here, we all, I suppose, want to get ashore as soon as possible. Therefore we shall probably call at your address in the course of an hour or so after you get there."

Wilfrid and Marion were indeed in such a hurry to get ashore that a very few minutes after the Mitfords left the side of the ship the Renshaws took a boat and started for the shore. Most of the other passengers also landed.

"We shall go in alongside the quays in an hour's time," the captain said, as they left; "so you must look for us there when you have done sightseeing. We shall begin to get the baggage up at once for the benefit of those who are in a hurry to get away to the hotels; but I shall be glad for you all to make the ship your home until to-morrow."

For an hour after landing the Renshaws wandered about Wellington, which they found to be a pretty and well-built town with wide streets.

"Why, it is quite a large place!" Wilfrid exclaimed in surprise. "Different, of course, from towns at home, with more open spaces. I expected it would be much rougher than it is."

"It is the second town of the island, you see," Mr. Renshaw said; "and is an important place. Well, I am glad we did not cumber ourselves by bringing everything

out from England, for there will be no difficulty in providing ourselves with everything we require here."

After wandering about for an hour they proceeded to the address Mr. Mitford had given them. It was a house of considerable size, standing in a pretty garden, a quarter of a mile from the business part of the town. They were warmly received by the Mitfords, and introduced to Mr. and Mrs. Jackson.

"Mr. Mitford has been telling me that you want to get a house or part of a house, for a few weeks till you look about you and decide where you will settle down," Mr. Jackson said. "I am a land and estate agent, beside doing a little in other ways. We most of us turn our hands to anything that presents itself here. I have taken a holiday for this morning and left my clerk in charge, so I am quite at your service. You will find it difficult and expensive if you take a whole house, so I should advise you strongly to take lodgings. If you were a large party it would be different, but you only want a sitting room and three bedrooms."

"We could do with a sitting-room, a good-sized bedroom for my wife and myself, and a small one for my daughter," Mr. Renshaw said; "and take a bedroom out for a few nights for Wilfrid, as he will be starting with a friend to journey through the colony and look out for a piece of land to suit us."

"Then there will be no difficulty at all. You will find lodgings rather more expensive than in England. I do not mean more expensive than a fashionable watering-place, but certainly more expensive than in a town of the same kind at home. House rent is high here; but then, on the other hand, your living will cost you less than at home."

After an hour's search lodgings were found in a house

at no great distance from that of Mr. Jackson. It was a small house, kept by the widow of the owner and captain of a small trading ship that had been lost a year previously. The ship had fortunately been insured, and the widow was able to keep on the house in which she lived, adding to her income by letting a portion of it to new arrivals, who, like the Renshaws, intended to make a stay of some little time in Wellington before taking any steps to establish themselves as settlers.

"I think," Mr. Jackson said when this was settled, "you are doing wisely by letting your son here take a run through the colony. There is no greater mistake than for newcomers to be in a hurry. Settle in haste and repent at leisure is the rule. Mr. Mitford was saying that he hoped that you might settle down somewhere in his locality; but at any rate it will be best to look round first. There is plenty of land at present to be obtained anywhere, and there are many things to be considered in choosing a location. Carriage is of course a vital consideration, and a settler on a river has a great advantage over one who has to send his produce a long distance to market by wagon. Then, again, some people prefer taking up virgin land, and clearing it for themselves, while others are ready to pay a higher sum to take possession of a holding where much of the hard work has already been done, and a house stands ready for occupation.

"At present no one, of course, with a wife and daughter would think of settling in the disturbed district, although farms can be bought there for next to nothing. The war is, I hope, nearly at an end, now that we have ten British regiments in the island. They have taken most of the enemy's pahs, though they have been a prodigious time about it, and we colonists are very discontented with the dilatory way in which the war has

been carried on, and think that if things had been left to ourselves we could have stamped the rebellion out in half the time. The redcoats were much too slow, too heavily weighted, and too cautious for this sort of work. The Maoris defend their pahs well, inflict a heavy loss upon their assailants, and when the latter at last make their attack and carry the works the Maoris manage to slip away, and the next heard of them is they have erected a fresh pah, and the whole thing has to be gone through again. However, we need not discuss that now. I take it that anyhow you would not think of settling down anywhere in the locality of the tribes that have been in revolt."

"Certainly not," Mr. Renshaw said. "I am a peaceful man, and if I could get a house and land for nothing and an income thrown into the bargain, I should refuse it if I could not go to bed without the fear that the place might be in flames before the morning."

"I am bound to say that the natives have as a whole behaved very well to the settlers; it would have been easy in a great number of cases for them to have cut them off had they chosen to do so. But they have fought fairly and well according to the rules of what we may call honorable warfare. The tribesmen are for the most part Christians, and have carried out Christian precepts.

"In one case, hearing that the troops assembling to attack one of their pahs were short of provisions, they sent down boatloads of potatoes and other vegetables to them, saying that the Bible said, 'If thine enemy hunger feed him.' Still, in spite of instances of this kind, I should certainly say do not go near the disturbed districts, for one cannot assert that if hostilities continue they will always be carried on in that spirit. However, things are at present perfectly peaceable throughout the

provinces of Wellington and Hawke Bay, and it may be hoped it may continue so. I have maps and plans of all the various districts, and before your son starts will give him all the information I possess as to the advantages and disadvantages of each locality, the nature of the soil, the price at which land can be purchased, and the reputation of the natives in the neighborhood."

The next day the Renshaws landed after breakfast and took up their abode in the new lodgings. These were plainly but comfortably furnished, and after one of the trunks containing knickknacks of all descriptions had been opened, and some of the contents distributed, the room assumed a comfortable homelike appearance. A lodging had been obtained close by for the two Grimstones. The young fellows were heartily glad to be on shore again, for life among the steerage passengers during a long voyage is dull and monotonous. Mr. Renshaw had looked after them during the voyage, and had supplied them from his own stores with many little comforts in the way of food, and with books to assist them to pass their time; still they were very glad the voyage was over.

When he now told them it was probable that a month or even more might pass after their arrival in the colony before he could settle on a piece of land, and that during that time they would remain at Wellington, they at once asked him to get them work of some kind if he could. "We should be learning something about the place, sir; and should probably get our food for our work, and should be costing you nothing, and we would much rather do that than loiter about town doing nothing."

Mr. Renshaw approved of their plan, and mentioned it to Mr. Jackson, who, on the very day after their landing, spoke to a settler who had come in from a farm some twenty miles in the interior.

"They are active and willing young fellows and don't want pay, only to be put up and fed until the man who has brought them out here with him gets hold of a farm."

"I shall be extremely glad to have them," the settler said. "This is a very busy time with us, and a couple of extra hands will be very useful. They will learn a good deal as to our ways here in the course of a month, and, as you say, it would be far better for them to be at work than to be loafing about the place doing nothing."

Accordingly, the next morning the two Grimstones went up country and set to work.

CHAPTER IX.

THE NEW ZEALAND WAR.

For a few days the greater part of the passengers who had arrived by the Flying Scud remained in Wellington. Mr. Atherton and the two Allens had put up at the same hotel. The latter intended to go out as shepherds or in any other capacity on a farm, for a few months at any rate, before investing in land. They had two or three letters of introduction to residents in Wellington, and ten days after the arrival of the ship they called at the Renshaws to say good-by, as they had arranged to go for some months with a settler up the country. They promised to write regularly to Wilfrid and tell him all about the part to which they were going.

"Mr. Atherton has promised to write to us," they said, "and tell us about the districts he visits with you, and if you and he discover anything particularly inviting we shall at any rate come and see you, if you will give us an invitation when you are settled, and look round there before buying land anywhere else. It would be very pleasant to be somewhere near you and him."

"We shall be very glad, indeed, to see you," Mrs. Renshaw said; "still more glad if you take up a piece of ground near us. Having friends near is a very great point in such a life as this, and it would be most agreeable having a sort of little colony of our own."

"We should have liked very much," James Allen said, "to say good-by to the Miss Mitfords, but as we do not

Waikari L.
AUCKLAND
Patutahi
Waihau Lakes
Paparatu
Arai Creek
Big R.
Turanganui
Poverty Bay
HAWKE BAY
Mohaka R.
Waitiua R.
To Napier
Whakaki Lagoon
Wairoa R.
Hawke Bay
Long Pt.
NORTH ISLAND
Auckland
AUCKLAND
TARANAKI
HAWKE BAY
Wellington
SOUTH ISLAND
Hokitika
WESTLAND
CANTERBURY
NELSON
MARLBOROUGH
Christchurch
Dunedin
Stewart I.
NEW ZEALAND.
English Miles
0 50 100 200
Sketch Map
of
WAIROA AND POVERTY BAY
DISTRICTS
NORTH ISLAND, NEW ZEALAND
to illustrate the Scene of Action in
"MAORI & SETTLER."
English Miles
0 5 10 20

Maori.

know their father and mother it might seem strange for us to call there."

"I do not think they are at all people to stand on ceremony, Mrs. Renshaw said; "but I will put on my bonnet and go round with you at once if you like."

This was accordingly done. Mr. Mitford had heard of the young men as forming part of the little group of passengers on board the Flying Scud, and gave them a hearty invitation to pay him a visit if they happened to be in his neighborhood, and the next day they started for the farm on which they had engaged themselves. Two days later there was a general break-up of the party, for Mr. and Mrs. Mitford started with their daughters in a steamer bound to Hawke Bay.

"Will you tell me, Mr. Jackson, what all the trouble in the north has been about," Wilfrid asked that evening, "for I have not been able to find out from the papers?"

"It is a complicated question, Wilfrid. When New Zealand was first colonized the natives were very friendly. The early settlers confidently pushed forward into the heart of the native districts, bought tracts of land from the chiefs, and settled there. Government purchased large blocks of land, cut off by intervening native territory from the main settlements, and sold this land to settlers without a suspicion that they were thereby dooming them to ruin. The settlers were mostly small farmers, living in rough wooden houses scattered about the country, and surrounded by a few fields; the adjoining land is usually fern or forest held by the natives. They fenced their fields, and turned their cattle, horses, and sheep at large in the open country outside these fences, paying rent to the natives for the privilege of doing so.

"This led to innumerable quarrels. The native plan-

tations of wheat, potatoes, or maize are seldom fenced in, and the cattle of the settlers sometimes committed much devastation among them; for the Maori fields were often situated at long distances from their villages, and the cattle might, therefore, be days in their patches before they were found out. On the other hand, the gaunt, long-legged Maori pigs, which wander over the country picking up their own living, were constantly getting through the settlers' fences, rooting up their potatoes, and doing all sorts of damage.

"In these cases the settlers always had the worst of the quarrel. They either had no weapons, or, being isolated in the midst of the natives, dared not use them; while the Maoris, well armed and numerous, would come down waving their tomahawks and pointing their guns, and the settlers, however much in the right, were forced to give way. The natural result was that the colonists were continually smarting under a sense of wrong, while the Maoris grew insolent and contemptuous and were filled with an overweening confidence in their own powers, the result of the patience and enforced submission of the settlers. The authority of the queen over the natives had always been a purely nominal one. There was indeed a treaty signed acknowledging her government, but as none of the chiefs put their name to this, and the men who signed were persons of inferior rank with no authority whatever to speak for the rest, the treaty was not worth the paper on which it was written.

"The Maoris from the first exhibited a great desire for education. They established numerous schools in their own districts and villages; in most cases accepted nominally if not really the Christian religion, and studied history with a good deal of intelligence. Some of them read that the Romans conquered England by making

roads everywhere through the island, and the natives therefore determined that no roads should be constructed through their lands, and every attempt on the part of government to carry roads beyond the lands it had bought from them was resisted so firmly and angrily that the attempt had to be abandoned. The natives were well enough aware that behind the despised settlers was the power of England, and that if necessary a numerous army could be sent over, but they relied absolutely upon their almost impassable swamps, their rivers, forests, and mountains.

"Here they thought they could maintain themselves against any force that might be sent against them, and relying upon this they became more and more insolent and overbearing, and for some time before the outbreak in 1860 everyone saw that sooner or later the storm would burst, and the matter have to be fought out until either we were driven from the island or the natives became thoroughly convinced of their inability to oppose us.

"At first the natives had sold their land willingly, but as the number of the European settlers increased they became jealous of them, and every obstacle was thrown in the way of land sales by the chiefs. Disputes were constantly arising owing to the fact that the absolute ownership of land was very ill defined, and perhaps a dozen or more persons professed to have claims of some sort or other on each piece of land, and had to be individually settled with before the sale could be effected. When as it seemed all was satisfactorily concluded, fresh claimants would arise, and disputes were therefore of constant occurrence, for there were no authorities outside the principal settlements to enforce obedience to the law.

"Even in Auckland itself the state of things was almost unbearable. Drunken Maoris would indulge in insolent and riotious behavior in the street; for no native could be imprisoned without the risk of war, and with the colonists scattered about all over the country the risk was too great to be run. In addition to the want of any rule or authority to regulate the dealings of the natives with the English, there were constant troubles between the native tribes.

"Then began what is called the king movement. One of the tribes invited others to join in establishing a central authority, who would at once put a stop to these tribal feuds and enforce something like law and order, and they thought that having a king of their own would improve their condition—would prevent land from being sold to the whites, and be a protection to the people at large, and enable them to hold their own against the settlers. Several of the tribes joined in this movement. Meetings were held in various parts in imitation of the colonial assemblies. The fruit of much deliberation was that a chief named Potatau, who was held in the highest esteem not only by the tribes of Waikato, but throughout the whole island, as one of the greatest of their warriors and wisest of their chiefs, was chosen as king.

"The movement excited much apprehension in Auckland and the other settlements, for it was plain that if the Maoris were governed by one man and laid aside their mutual enmities they would become extremely formidable. At the great meeting that was held, the bishop of New Zealand, the head of the Wesleyan body, and several other missionaries were present, and warned the Maoris of the dangers that would arise from the course they were taking.

"The warning was in vain, and Potatau was chosen

king. Mr. Fenton, a government official, went on a tour among the natives. He found that there was still what was called a queen's party, but the king's party was very much the strongest. For two years, however, things went on somewhat as before, and it was not until 1860, when a quarrel arose over some land in the province of Taranaki, that troubles fairly began. In this district a chief named Wiremu-Kingi had established a sort of land league, and given notice to the governor that he would not permit any more land to be sold in the district. A native named Teira, who owned some land at Waiteira, offered it for sale to the government. After examining his title, and finding that it was a valid one, the land was purchased.

"In the spring of 1860 the governor tried to take possession. Wiremu-Kingi forcibly resisted, the troops were called out, and war began. Wiremu-Kingi had unquestionably certain rights on Teira's land, for he and his tribe were amicably settled upon it, had built houses, and were making plantations; but of these facts the government were ignorant when they bought the land. Wiremu-Kingi at once joined the king movement, from which he had previously stood aloof. A meeting was held at Waikato. Chief Wiremu-Kingi and Mr. McLean the native secretary, both addressed the meeting, and Potatau and many of the chiefs were of opinion that the English had acted fairly in the case. Many of the younger chiefs, however, took the part of the Taranaki natives, and marched away and joined them.

"Unfortunately, in the first fight that took place, our troops were driven back in an attack upon a pah, and the news of this success so fired the minds of all the fighting men of the Waikato and neighboring tribes that they flocked down to Taranaki and joined in plundering

the deserted homes of the settlers, and in the attacks upon the troops. Potatau and his council did all they could to stop their men from going, but the desire to distinguish themselves and to take part in the victories over the Pakehas, which is what the natives call the whites, were too strong for them. In the midst of all this turmoil Potatau died, and his son Matu-Taera was made king.

"In the fighting that went on in Taranaki discipline and training soon began to make themselves felt. The troops in the colony were largely reinforced, and pah after pah were captured. The war went on. But though English regiments with a strong force of artillery were engaged in it, it cannot be said that the natives have been conquered, and General Cameron, who came out and assumed the command, found the task before him a very difficult one.

"There was for a time a pause in hostilities when Sir George Grey came out as governor in the place of Governor Brown, but the natives recommenced hostilities by a treacherous massacre near New Plymouth, and fighting began again at once.

"The native pah near the Katikara river was attacked by a column of infantry with artillery, and shelled by the guns of a ship of war, and the Maoris were driven out of a position that they believed impregnable. The Waikatos now rose and murdered and plundered many of the settlers, and a force marched for the first time into their country, carried a formidable pah, at Koheroa, and, although unprovided with artillery, defeated the Maoris in a fight in the thick bush. The very formidable position at Merimeri, which lay surrounded by swamps near the Waikato river, was next captured, although held by eleven hundred Maoris, led by their great chief Wiremu-Tamehana, called by the missionaries William Thompson.

"The next attack was upon a strongly fortified position at Rangiriri, lying between the Waikato river and Waikare lake. This was successful, and the natives were next thrashed at Rangiawhia, at Kaitake, on the 25th of last March. Thus, you see, in almost all of these fights we succeeded in capturing the enemy's pah or in defeating them if they fought in the open. Unfortunately, although these engagements showed the natives that in fair fighting they were no match for our troops, they have done little more. When their pahs were captured they almost invariably managed to make their way though the dense bush, and it can scarcely be said that we do more than hold the ground occupied by our soldiers. And so matters still go on. The fighting has been confined to the Taranaki and Auckland provinces, and we may hope that it will go no further."

"Well, it is quite evident," Mr. Renshaw said, "that neither the Waikato country nor Taranaki are fit places for quiet people to settle at the present time, and I suppose the northern part of Wellington is not much better?"

"No, I cannot say it is," Mr. Jackson said. "The Wanganui tribe, on the river of that name, are in alliance with the Taranaki people, and have joined them in fighting against us, and I believe that General Cameron will shortly undertake a campaign against them. I shall strongly advise you to turn your attention to the eastern side of this province, or to the province of Hawke Bay, higher up, where they have had no trouble whatever, and where, as you know, our friends the Mitfords are settled."

"What is this that I have heard about a new religion that has been started among the Maoris?"

"There is but little known about it, and if it were not

that should this religion spread it will add to our difficulties, no one would think anything about it one way or the other. There was a fellow named Te Ua, who had always been looked upon as a harmless lunatic. No doubt he is a lunatic still, though whether he will be harmless remains to be seen. However, he some little time ago gave out that the archangel Michael, the angel Gabriel, and hosts of minor spirits visited him and gave him permission to preach a new religion, and bestowed on him great power.

"The religion was to be called Pai Marire, which interpreted literally means good and peaceful; and it is also called Hau-Hau, the meaning of which is obscure, but it is a special word of power that Te Ua professes to have specially received from the angel Gabriel. As far as we have been able to learn the Hau-Haus have no special belief or creed, except that their leader has a divine mission, and that all he says is to be implicitly obeyed. Certainly the religion has spread quickly among the tribes, and has latterly taken the form of hostility to us. Still, we may hope that it will soon die out. It is said that Te Ua has told his followers that they are invulnerable, but if they try conclusions with us they will very speedily find that he has deceived them, and are not likely to continue their belief in him."

"Then the colonists themselves, Mr. Jackson, have taken but little share in the fighting so far?"

"Oh, yes, they have. There have been several corps of rangers which have done capital service. The corps led by Majors Atkinson, Von Tempsky, and McDonnell have done great service, and are far more dreaded by the natives than are the slow-moving regular troops. They fight the natives in their own manner—make raids into their country and attack their positions at night, and so

much are they dreaded that the natives in villages in their vicinity are in the habit of leaving their huts at night and sleeping in the bush lest they should be surprised by their active enemy. The general opinion among us colonists is that ten companies like Von Tempsky's would do a great deal more than ten British regiments toward bringing the matter to a conclusion.

"In the first place, the officers and troops of the regular army cannot bring themselves to regard the natives with the respect they deserve as foes. Their movements are hampered by the necessity of a complicated system of transport. Their operations, accompanied as they are by artillery and a wagon train, are slow in the extreme, and do what they will the natives always slip through their hands. The irregular corps, on the other hand, thoroughly appreciate the activity and bravery of the Maoris. They have lived among them, and know their customs and ways. They have suffered from the arrogance and insolence of the natives before the outbreak of the war, and most of them have been ruined by the destruction of their farms and the loss of years of patient labor. Thus they fight with a personal feeling of enmity against their foes, and neither fatigue nor danger is considered by them if there is a chance of inflicting a blow upon their enemy. I am convinced that at last the imperial government will be so disgusted at the failure of the troops to bring the war to a conclusion, and at the great expense and loss of life entailed by the operations, that they will recall the regulars and leave the colonists to manage the affair themselves, in which case I have no fear whatever as to their bringing it to a prompt conclusion. Looking at the matter from a business point of view, there is no doubt, Mr. Renshaw, that those who, like yourself, come out at the present time will benefit

considerably. You will get land at a quarter the price you would have had to pay for it had it not been for these troubles, and as soon as the war is over the tide of emigration will set in again more strongly than before, and land will go to prices far exceeding those that ruled before the outbreak began."

Upon the following morning Mr. Atherton and Wilfrid embarked in the schooner. They had been furnished by Mr. Jackson with a number of letters of introduction to settlers in every district they were to visit. "These will really only be of use to you in the small towns," he said, "for in the country districts every house is open, and you have generally only to ride up to a door, put up your horses, and walk in, and you are almost sure to meet with a hearty welcome. Still, as you are newcomers, and have not rubbed off your old country ideas, it will be more pleasant for you to take letters. At the ports, such as they are, you may really find them useful, for you will not find any inns. You can strike out anywhere into the back country without the least fear of being inconvenienced by natives."

The two friends spent a pleasant fortnight touching at the settlements, situated for the most part at the mouths of the rivers, and spending the time the vessel remained there in short excursions into the interior. They were most pleased with the Wairarapa Valley, running up from Palliser Bay; but this being near Wellington the land was all taken up, and there were many flourishing villages and small towns.

"This is very nice," Wilfrid said, "but the price of land is far too high for us, and we might almost as well have taken to farming in England."

The eastern coast of the province was dotted by little settlements, lying for the most part at the mouths of

small rivers, and several of these offered favorable facilities for settlement. Passing on, they found that the coast was bolder along the province of Hawke Bay. They stopped at Clive, at the mouth of the bay, for a day or two, and went up the Tukataki river in a canoe to the town of Waipawa. But here they found the farms thick and land comparatively expensive. They left the schooner at Napier, the chief town of the province, and after making several excursions here went up in a coasting craft to the mouth of the river Mohaka, which runs into the sea a short distance to the south of the boundary line between Hawke Bay and the province of Auckland. A few miles up this river was the farm of Mr. Mitford. Hiring a boat they proceeded up the river, and landed in front of the comfortable-looking farmhouse of the settler.

Mr. Mitford, seeing strangers approaching, at once came down to meet them, and received them with the greatest cordiality as soon as he saw who they were.

"I am heartily glad to see you!" he exclaimed, "and the girls will be delighted. They have been wondering ever since we got here when you would arrive. You have not, I hope, fixed upon any land yet, for they have set their heart upon your settling down as our neighbors. This is as pretty a valley as there is in the island, and you will have no difficulty in getting land at the lowest government price. There being no settlement of any size at the mouth of the river has deterred emigrants from coming here to search for land. But we can talk about that afterward. Come straight up to the house. I will send down one of my native boys to bring up your baggage."

They spent a very pleasant evening at the farmhouse. Mr. Mitford owned a considerable extent of land, and

was doing very well. He reared cattle and horses, which he sent down for sale to Wellington. The house was large and comfortable, and bore signs of the prosperity of its owner. The girls were delighted at the place. They had been left in care of relatives at home when their father and mother came out six years before to settle in New Zealand, and everything was as new to them as to Wilfrid. They had taken to riding as soon as they arrived, and had already made excursions far up the valley with their father.

"We were at a place yesterday, Wilfrid," the eldest girl said, "that we agreed would suit your father admirably. It is about ten miles up the river. It was taken up only last year, father says, by a young Englishman, who is going to make a home for some one he was engaged to in England. A few days since he was killed by a tree he was cutting down falling upon him. He lived twenty-four hours after the accident, and father rode out to him when he heard it. He directed him to sell the land for whatever it would fetch, and to send the money over to England. There are two hundred acres on the river and a comfortable log hut, which could of course be enlarged. He had about fifteen acres cleared and cultivated. The scenery is beautiful, much prettier than it is here, with lots of lovely tree-ferns; and there are many open patches, so that more land can be cleared for cultivation easily. Mabel and I agreed when we rode over there two days ago that it would be just the place for you."

"It sounds first-rate," Wilfrid said; "just the sort of place that will suit us."

"But how about me, Miss Mitford?" Mr. Atherton asked. "Have you had my interest at heart as well as those of Wilfrid and his people?"

"You can take up the next bit of land above it," Mr. Mitford said. "Langston's was the last settlement on the river, so you can take up any piece of land beyond it at the government upset price, and do as much fishing and shooting as you like, for I heard from my daughters that you are not thinking of permanently settling here, but are only a bird of passage. Anyhow, it would not be a bad investment for you to buy a considerable acreage, for as soon as the troubles are over there is sure to be a rush of emigration; and there are very few places now where land is to be had on a navigable river, so that when you are tired of the life you will be able to sell out at considerable profit."

"It sounds tempting, Mr. Mitford, and I will certainly have a look at the ground. How much would this piece of land be of Mr. Langston's?"

"The poor fellow told me to take anything that I could get. He said he knew that at present it was very difficult to sell land, as no new settlers were coming out, and that he should be very glad if I got what he gave for it, which was ten shillings an acre, and to throw in the improvements he had made; so that a hundred pounds would buy it all. I really don't think that Mr. Renshaw could do better if he looked all through the island. With a cow or two, a pen of pigs, and a score or two of fowls, he would practically be able to live on his land from the hour he settled there."

Wilfrid was greatly pleased at the idea. He knew that his father and mother had still eight hundred pounds untouched; two hundred pounds, together with the proceeds of his mother's trinkets and jewels, and the sale of the ponies and pony carriage, which had been her own property, having sufficed to pay for the passage of themselves and their two laborers, and for all expenses up to

the time of their arrival at Wellington. "If we could get another piece of two hundred acres adjoining it at the same price I think my father would like to take it," he said; "it would give more room for horses and cattle to graze. Of course we should not want it at first; but if as we got on we wanted more land, and had neighbors all round us and could not get it, it would be a nuisance."

"I agree with you," Mr. Mitford said. "Two hundred acres is more than you want if you are going to put it under the plow; it is not enough if you are going to raise cattle and horses. I should certainly recommend you to take up another two hundred. The next land on this side is still vacant. Poor Langston chose the spot because it happened to be particularly pretty, with an open glade down to the river, but the land for fully two miles on this side is unoccupied. You can get it at ten shillings an acre at present. I will see about it for you if you make up your mind, after seeing Langston's place, to take it."

"Of course I cannot settle it by myself, sir, not absolutely. I can only recommend it to my father as the best place that I have seen. If it is as you describe it they will be delighted."

"Well, we will ride over to-morrow and have a look at it. The only possible objection I have is loneliness; but that will improve in time; the natives here are perfectly peaceful, and we have never had the slightest trouble with them."

"We are a good large party to begin with, you see," Wilfrid said. "Having the two men with us will take away the feeling of loneliness, especially if Mr. Atherton decides upon taking the piece of land next to us. Then there are the two Allens who came out with us. I promised to write and tell them if I found any nice place;

and they said particularly that they wanted ground on a river if they could get it, as they are fond of boating and fishing, and fancied that if there were other farms around that they could, until their own place paid, help to keep themselves by taking their neighbors' crops down to market."

"Yes, it might pay if they got a large flatboat capable of carrying cargo; but as far as light goods, letters, and groceries from town are concerned, the Indians could do it cheaper in their canoes. However, at present there is no market for them to come down to. I keep what I call a grocery store for the benefit of the two or three score of settlers there are on the river. I do not make any profit out of the matter, but each season get a hogshead or two of sugar, a couple tons of flour, some barrels of molasses, a few chests of tea, and an assortment of odds and ends, such as pickles, etc., with a certain amount of rum and whisky, and sell them at the price they stand me in at. I do not know what they would do without it here. I only open the store on the first Monday of each month, and they then lay in what stores they require, so it gives me very little trouble. I generally take produce in return. My bills run on until they get up to the value of something a customer wants to sell—a horse, or two or three dozen sheep. That suits me just as well as money, as I send a cargo off to Wellington every two or three months.

"In time, no doubt, a settlement will spring up somewhere near the mouth of the river, and we shall have a trader or two establishing themselves there; but at present I am the purveyor of the district, and manage most of the business of the settlers in the way of buying and selling at Wellington. So you see, if you establish yourself here you will have no choice but to appoint me your grocer."

Wilfrid laughed. "It will be a great advantage to us to be able to get our things so close at hand. I was wondering how people did in the back settlements."

"They generally send their drays every two or three months down to the nearest store, which may, of course, be fifty miles off, or even more. Here, fortunately, you will not be obliged at first to have a dray, but can send any produce you have to sell down by water, which is a far cheaper and more convenient mode of carriage. You will not have much to send for some time, so that will not trouble you at present."

"Oh, no. We shall be quite content if we can live on the produce of our farm for the next year or two," Wilfrid laughed.

"It is," Mr. Mitford said, "an immense advantage to settlers when they have sufficient funds to carry them on for the first two or three years, because in that case they gain the natural increase of their animals instead of having to sell them off to pay their way. It is wonderful how a flock of sheep or a herd of cattle will increase if there is no selling. You may take it that under favorable circumstances a herd of cattle will nearly double itself every two years, allowing, of course, a large proportion of the bull calves to be sold off as soon as they arrive at maturity. Sheep will increase even faster. If you can do without selling, you will be surprised, if you start with say fifty sheep or ten cows, in how short a time you will have as many animals as your land will carry."

"But what are we to do then, sir?"

"Well, you will then, providing the country has not in the meantime become too thickly settled, pay some small sum to the natives for the right of grazing your cattle on their unoccupied ground. They cultivate a

mere fraction of the land. In this way you can keep vastly larger herds than your own ground could carry. However, it is time to be turning in for the night. To-morrow we will start the first thing after breakfast to inspect Langston's land."

CHAPTER X.

THE GLADE.

When the party assembled at breakfast the next morning, Mr. Atherton's first question was:

"Is there such a thing as a boat or a good-sized canoe to be had, Mr. Mitford? If you had an elephant here I might manage, but as I suppose you do not keep such an animal in your stud I own that I should greatly prefer going by water to running the risk of breaking a horse's back and my own neck. If such a thing cannot be obtained I will get you, if you will, to let me have a native as guide, and I will walk, taking with me some small stock of provisions. I can sleep at this hut of Langston's, for I say frankly that I should not care about doing the distance there and back in one day."

"I have a boat," Mr. Mitford said, smiling, "and you shall have a couple of natives to paddle you up. I will give orders for them to be ready directly after breakfast. You will scarcely be there as soon as we are, but you will be there long before we leave. Of course we shall spend some time in going over the ground, and we shall take a boy with us with a luncheon basket, so you will find refreshment awaiting you when you get there."

"That will suit me admirably," Mr. Atherton said. "A boating excursion up an unknown river is just the thing I like—that is, when the boat is a reasonable size. I was once fool enough on the Amazon to allow myself to be persuaded that a canoe at most two feet wide would

carry me, and the tortures I suffered during that expedition, wedged in the bottom of that canoe, and holding on to the sides, I shall never forget. The rascally Indians made matters worse by occasionally giving sly lurches to the boat, and being within an ace of capsizing her. I had two days of that work before I got to a village where I could obtain a craft of reasonable size, and I should think I must have lost two stone in weight during the time. You think that was rather an advantage I can see, Miss Mitford," he broke off, seeing a smile upon the girl's face. "Well, yes, I could spare that and more, but I should prefer that it was abstracted by other means than that of agony of mind; beside, these improvements are not permanent."

After a hearty breakfast the party prepared for their start. Mrs. Mitford had already said that she should not accompany them, the distance being longer than she cared to ride; and four horses were therefore brought round. Mr. Atherton was first seen fairly on his way in a good-sized boat, paddled by two powerful Maoris. Mr. Mitford, his daughters, and Wilfrid then mounted; the lad had already been asked if he was accustomed to riding.

"Not lately," he replied, "but I used to have a pony and rode a good deal when I was a small boy, and I dare say I can stick on."

Wilfrid was delighted with his ride through the forest. In his other trips ashore their way had led through an open country with low scrub bush, and this was his first experience of a New Zealand forest. Ferns were growing everywhere. The tree-ferns, coated with scales, rose from thirty to forty feet in the air. *Hymenophylla* and *polypodia*, in extraordinary variety, covered the trunks of the forest trees with luxuriant growth. Smaller ferns

grew between the branches and twigs, and a thick growth of ferns of many species extended everywhere over the ground.

The trees were for the most part pines of different varieties, but differing so widely in appearance from those Wilfrid had seen in England that had not Mr. Mitford assured him that they were really pines he would never have guessed they belonged to that family. Mr. Mitford gave him the native names of many of them. The *totara matai* were among the largest and most beautiful. The *rinu* was distinguished by its hanging leaves and branches, the *tanekaha* by its parsley-shaped leaves. Among them towered up the poplar-shaped *rewarewa* and the *hinau*, whose fruit Mr. Mitford said was the favorite food of the parrots.

Among the great forest trees were several belonging to the families of the myrtles and laurels, especially the *rata*, whose trunk often measured forty feet in circumference, and on whose crown were branches of scarlet blossoms. But it was to the ferns, the orchids, and the innumerable creepers, which covered the ground with a natural netting, coiled round every stem, and entwined themselves among the topmost branches, that the forest owed its peculiar features. Outside the narrow cleared track along which they were riding it would have been impossible for a man to make his way unless with the assistance of knife and hatchet, especially as some of the climbers were completely covered with thorns.

And yet, although so very beautiful, the appearance of the forest was somber and melancholy. A great proportion of the plants of New Zealand bear no flowers, and except high up among some of the treetops no gay blossoms or color of any kind meet the eye to relieve the monotony of the verdure. A deep silence reigned,

Wilfrid did not see a butterfly during his ride, or hear the song or even the chirp of a single bird. It was a wilderness of tangled green, unrelieved by life or color. Mr. Mitford could give him the names of only a few of the principal trees; and seeing the infinite variety of the foliage around him, Wilfrid no longer wondered Mr. Atherton should have made so long a journey in order to study the botany of the island, which is unique, for although many of the trees and shrubs can be found elsewhere, great numbers are entirely peculiar to the island.

"Are there any snakes?" Wilfrid asked.

"No; you can wander about without fear. There is only one poisonous creature in New Zealand, and that is found north of the port of Tauranga, forty or fifty miles from here. They say it exists only there and round Potaki, near Cook's Strait. It is a small black spider, with a red stripe on its back. The natives all say that its bite is poisonous. It will not, they say, cause death to a healthy person, though it will make him very ill; but there are instances of sickly persons being killed by it. Anyhow, the natives dread it very much. However, as the beast is confined to two small localities, you need not trouble about it. The thorns are the only enemies you have to dread as you make your way through the forest."

"That is a comfort, anyhow," Wilfrid said; "it would be a great nuisance to have to be always on the watch against snakes."

The road they were traversing had been cleared of trees from one settler's holding to another, and they stopped for a few minutes at three or four of the farmhouses. Some of these showed signs of comfort and prosperity, while one or two were mere log cabins.

"I suppose the people here have lately arrived?" Wil-

frid remarked as they rode by one of these without stopping.

"They have been here upward of two years," Mr. Mitford replied; "but the place is not likely to improve were they to be here another ten. They are a thriftless, lazy lot, content to raise just sufficient for their actual wants and to pay for whisky. These are the sort of people who bring discredit on the colony by writing home declaring that there is no getting on here, and that a settler's life is worse than a dog's.

"People who come out with an idea that a colony is an easy place to get a living in are completely mistaken. For a man to succeed he must work harder and live harder here than he would do at home. He is up with the sun, and works until it is too dark to work longer. If he employs men he must himself set an example to them. Men will work here for a master who works himself, but one who thinks that he has only to pay his hands and can spend his time in riding about the country making visits, or in sitting quietly by his fire, will find that his hands will soon be as lazy as he is himself. Then the living here is rougher than it is at home for one in the same condition of life. The fare is necessarily monotonous. In hot weather meat will not keep more than a day or two, and a settler cannot afford to kill a sheep every day; therefore he has to depend either upon bacon or tinned meat, and I can tell you that a continuance of such fare palls upon the appetite, and one's meals cease to be a pleasure. But the curse of the country, as of all our colonies, is whisky. I do think the monotony of the food has something to do with it, and that if men could but get greater variety in their fare they would not have the same craving for drink. It is the ruin of thousands. A young fellow who lands here and deter-

mines to work hard and to abstain from liquors—I do not mean totally abstain, though if he has any inclination at all toward drink the only safety is total abstinence—is sure to get on and make his way, while the man who gives way to drink is equally certain to remain at the bottom of the tree. Now we are just passing the boundary of the holding you have come to see. You see that piece of bark slashed off the trunk of that tree? That is what we call a blaze, and marks the line of the boundary."

After riding a few minutes further the trees opened, and they found themselves in a glade sloping down to the river. A few acres of land had been plowed up and put under cultivation. Close by stood the hut, and beyond a grassy sward, broken by a few large trees, stretched down to the river.

"That's the place," Mr. Mitford said, "and a very pretty one it is. Poor young Langston chose his farm specially for that bit of scenery."

"It is pretty," Wilfrid agreed; "I am sure my father and mother will be delighted with it. As you said, it is just like a piece of park land at home."

The hut was strongly built of logs. It was about thirty feet long by twenty wide, and was divided into two rooms; the one furnished as a kitchen and living-room, the other opening from it as a bedroom.

"There is not much furniture in it," Mr. Mitford said; "but what there is is strong and serviceable, and is a good deal better than the generality of things you will find in a new settler's hut. He was getting the things in gradually as he could afford them, so as to have it really comfortably furnished by the time she came out to join him. Of course the place will not be large enough for your party, but you can easily add to it; and at any

rate it is vastly better coming to a shanty like this than arriving upon virgin ground and having everything to do."

"I think it is capital," Wilfrid said.

"Now we will take a ride over the ground, and I will show you what that is like. Of course it will give you more trouble clearing away the forest than it would do if you settled upon land without trees upon it. But forest land is generally the best when it is cleared; and I think that to people like your father and mother land like this is much preferable, as in making the clearings clumps and belts of trees can be left, giving a homelike appearance to the place. Of course upon bare land you can plant trees, but it is a long time before these grow to sufficient size to give a character to a homestead. Beside, as I told you, there are already several other natural clearings upon the ground, enough to afford grass for quite as many animals as you will probably start with."

After an hour's ride over the holding and the lands adjoining it, which Mr. Mitford advised should be also taken up, they returned to the hut. A shout greeted them as they arrived, and they saw Mr. Atherton walking up from the river toward the hut.

"A charming site for a mansion," he said as they rode up. "Mr. Mitford, I think I shall make you a bid for this on my own account, and so cut out my young friend Wilfrid."

"I am afraid you are too late," Mr. Mitford laughed. "I have already agreed to give him the option of it, keeping it open until we can receive a reply from his father."

"I call that too bad," Mr. Atherton grumbled. "However, I suppose I must move on further. But

really this seems a charming place, and I am sure Mrs. Renshaw will be delighted with it. Why, there must be thirty acres of natural clearing here?"

"About that," Mr. Mitford replied; "and there are two or three other patches which amount to about as much more. The other hundred and forty are bush and forest. The next lot has also some patches of open land, so that altogether out of the four hundred acres there must be about a hundred clear of bush."

"And how about the next lot, Mr. Mitford?"

"I fancy that there is about the same proportion of open land. I have only once been up the river higher than this, but if I remember right there is a sort of low bluff rising forty or fifty feet above the river which would form a capital site for a hut."

"I will set about the work of exploration this afternoon," Mr. Atherton said, "and if the next lot is anything like this I shall be very well contented to settle down upon it for a bit. I have always had a fancy for a sort of Robinson Crusoe life, and I think I can get it here, tempered by the change of an occasional visit to our friends when I get tired of my own company."

The men had by this time brought up the basket of provisions, and the two girls were spreading a cloth on the grass in the shade of a tree at a short distance from the hut, for all agreed that they would rather take their lunch there than in the abode so lately tenanted by young Langston. After the meal was over the party mounted their horses and rode back. One of the natives who had come up from the boat remained with Mr. Atherton, the others started back in the boat, as Mr. Atherton declared himself to be perfectly capable of making the journey on foot when he had finished his explorations. He returned two days later, and said he was quite satisfied with the proposed site for his hut and with the ground and forest.

"I regard myself as only a temporary inhabitant," he said, "and shall be well content if, when I am ready for another move, I can get as much for the ground as I gave for it. In that way I shall have lived rent free and shall have had my enjoyment for nothing, and, I have no doubt, a pleasant time to look back upon."

"Do you never mean to settle down, Mr. Atherton?" Mrs. Mitford asked.

"In the dim future I may do so," he replied. "I have been wandering ever since I left college, some fifteen years ago. I return to London periodically, spend a few weeks and occasionally a few months there, enjoy the comforts of good living and club life for a bit; then the wandering fit seizes me and I am off again. Nature altogether made a mistake in my case. I ought to have been a thin, wiry sort of man, and in that case I have no doubt I should have distinguished myself as an African explorer or something of that sort. Unfortunately she placed my restless spirit in an almost immovable frame of flesh, and the consequence is the circle of my wandering is to a certain extent limited."

"You make yourself out to be much stouter than you are, Mr. Atherton. Of course you are stout, but not altogether out of proportion to your height and width of shoulders. I think you put it on a good deal as an excuse for laziness."

Mr. Atherton laughed. "Perhaps you are right, Mrs. Mitford, though my weight is really a great drawback to my carrying out my views in regard to travel. You see, I am practically debarred from traveling in countries where the only means of locomotion is riding on horses. I could not find animals in any foreign country that would carry me for any distance. I might in England, I grant, find a weight-carrying cob capable of conveying

twenty stone along a good road, but I might search all Asia in vain for such a horse, while as for Africa it would take a dozen natives to carry me in a hammock. No, I suppose I shall go on wandering pretty nearly to the end of the chapter, and shall then settle down in quiet lodgings somewhere in the region of Pall Mall."

Upon the day after his return from the inspection of the farm Wilfrid wrote home to his father describing the location, and saying that he thought it was the very thing to suit them. It would be a fortnight before an answer could be received, and during that time he set to work at Mr. Mitford's place to acquire as much knowledge as possible of the methods of farming in the colony. The answer arrived in due course, and with it came the two Grimstones. Wilfrid had suggested in his letter that if his father decided to take the farm the two men should be sent up at once to assist in adding to the hut and in preparing for their coming, and that they should follow a fortnight later. Mrs. Mitford also wrote, offering them a warm invitation to stay for a time with her until their own place should be ready for their occupation.

Mr. Mitford had an inventory of the furniture of the hut, and this was also sent, in order that such further furniture as was needed might be purchased at Wellington. As soon as the letter was received, inclosing, as it did, a check for a hundred pounds, Wilfrid went over with the two Grimstones and took possession. Mr. Mitford, who was the magistrate and land commissioner for the district, drew up the papers of application for the plot of two hundred acres adjoining the farm, and sent it to Wellington for Mr. Renshaw's signature, and said that in the meantime Wilfrid could consider the land as belonging to them, as it would be theirs as soon as the

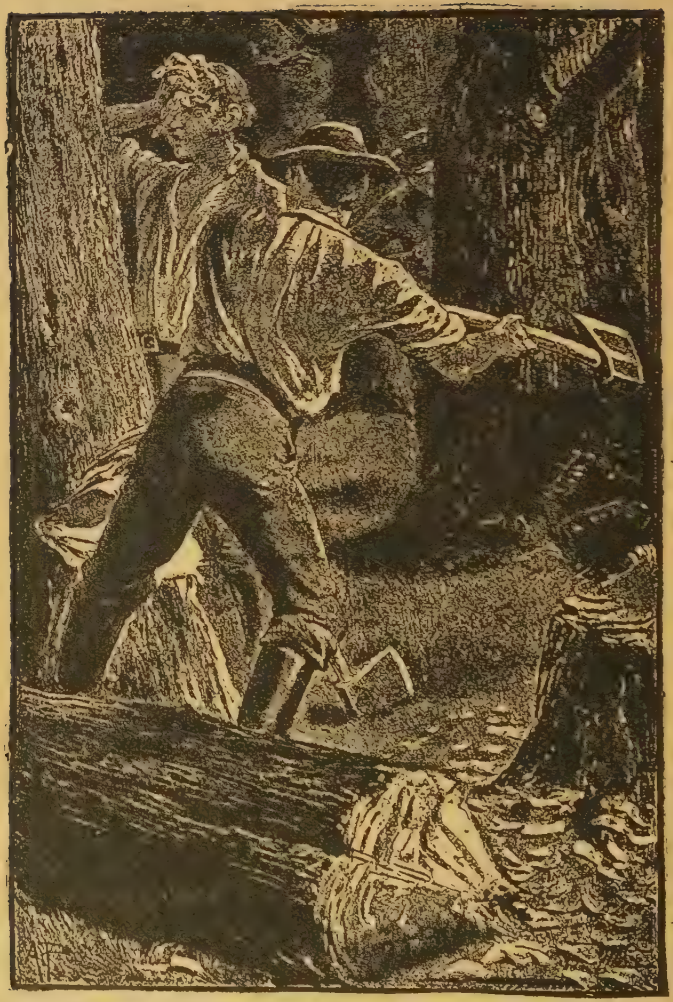
necessary formalities were completed and the money paid.

When Wilfrid started, two natives, whom Mr. Mitford had hired for him, accompanied him, and he also lent him the services of one of his own men, who was a handy carpenter. The Grimstones were delighted with the site of their new home.

"Why, it is like a bit of England, Master Wilfrid! That might very well be the Thames there, and this some gentleman's place near Reading; only the trees are different. When we get up a nice house here, with a garden round it, it will be like home again."

During the voyage the Renshaws had amused themselves by drawing a plan of their proposed house, and although this had to be somewhat modified by the existence of the hut, Wilfrid determined to adhere to it as much as possible. The present kitchen should be the kitchen of the new house, and the room leading from it should be allotted to the Grimstones. Adjoining the kitchen he marked out the plan of the house. It was to consist of a sitting-room twenty feet square; beyond this was Mr. and Mrs. Renshaw's bedroom; while behind it were two rooms, each ten feet square, for himself and Marion. The roof was to project four feet in front of the sitting-room, so as to form a veranda there.

A boatload of supplies was sent up from Mr. Mitford's stores. These consisted of flour, sugar, tea, molasses, and bacon, together with half a sheep. It was arranged that while the building was going on Wilfrid and the two Grimstones should occupy the bedroom, and that the natives should sleep in the kitchen. The Grimstones had brought with them the bedding and blankets with which they had provided themselves on board ship, while Wilfrid took possession of the bed formerly occupied by



Maori. WILFRID AND THE GRIMSTONES FIND IT HARD WORK.—Page 173

the young settler. Mr. Mitford himself came over next morning and gave general instructions as to the best way of setting about the building of the house. He had already advised that it should be of the class known as log huts.

"They are much cooler," he said, "in the heat of summer than frame huts, and have the advantage that in the very improbable event of troubles with the natives they are much more defensible. If you like, afterward, you can easily face them outside and in with match-board and make them as snug as you like; but to begin with, I should certainly say build with logs. My boy will tell you which trees you had better cut down for the work. It will take you a week to fell, lop, and roughly square them, and this day week I will send over a team of bullocks with a native to drag them up to the spot."

The work was begun at once. Half a dozen axes, some adzes, and other tools had been brought up with the supplies from the stores, and the work of felling commenced.

Wilfrid would not have any trees touched near the hut.

"There are just enough trees about here," he said, "and it would be an awful pity to cut them down merely to save a little labor in hauling. It will not make any great difference whether we have the team for a week or a fortnight."

Wilfrid and the two young Englishmen found chopping very hard work at first, and were perfectly astounded at the rapidity with which the Maoris brought the trees down, each of them felling some eight or ten before the new hands had managed to bring one to the ground.

"I would not have believed it if I had not seen it," Bob, the elder of the two brothers, exclaimed as he stood

breathless with the perspiration streaming from his forehead, "that these black chaps could have beaten Englishmen like that! Half a dozen strokes and down topples the tree, while I goes chop, chop, chop, and don't seem to get any nearer to it."

"It will come in time," Wilfrid said. "I suppose there is a knack in it, like everything else. It looks easy enough, but it is not easy if you don't know how to do it. It is like rowing; it looks the easiest thing in the world until you try, and then you find that it is not easy at all."

When work was done for the day Wilfrid and the Grimstones could scarcely walk back to the hut. Their backs felt as if they were broken, their arms and shoulders ached intolerably, their hands smarted as if on fire; while the Maoris, who had each achieved ten times the result, were as brisk and fresh as they were at starting. One of them had left work an hour before the others, and by the time they reached the hut the flat cakes of flour and water known as dampers had been cooked, and a large piece of mutton was frizzling over the fire. Wilfrid and his companions were almost too tired to eat, but they enjoyed the tea, although they missed the milk to which they were accustomed. They were astonished at the Maoris' appetite, the three natives devouring an amount of meat which would have lasted the others for a week.

"No wonder they work well when they can put away such a lot of food as that," Bob Grimstone said, after watching them for some time in silent astonishment. "Bill and me was always considered as being pretty good feeders, but one of these chaps would eat twice as much as the two of us. I should say, Mr. Wilfrid, that in future your best plan will be to let these chaps board

themselves. Why, it would be dear to have them without pay if you had to feed them!"

"Mutton is cheap out here," Wilfrid said. "You can get five or six pounds for the price which one would cost you at home; but still, I do not suppose they give them as much meat as they can eat every day. I must ask Mr. Mitford about it."

He afterward learned that the natives received rations of flour and molasses and tobacco, and that only occasionally salt pork or fresh meat were issued to them. But Mr. Mitford advised that Wilfrid should, as long as they were at this work, let them feed with the men.

"You will get a good deal more out of them if they are well fed and in good humor. When your people arrive the natives will of course have a shanty of their own at some distance from your house, and then you will put things on regular footing and serve out their rations to them weekly. I will give you the scale usually adopted in the colony."

The second day Wilfrid and the Grimstones were so stiff that they could at first scarcely raise their axes. This gradually wore off, and at the end of three or four days they found that they could get through a far greater amount than at first with much less fatigue to themselves; but even on the last day of the week they could do little more than a third of the amount performed by the natives. By this time an ample supply of trees had been felled. The trunks had been cut into suitable lengths and roughly squared. The bullocks arrived from Mr. Mitford's, and as soon as the first logs were brought up to the house the work of building was commenced. The Maori carpenter now took the lead, and under his instructions the walls of the house rose rapidly. The logs were mortised into each other at the corners; openings

were left for the doors and windows. These were obtained from Mr. Mitford's store, as they were constantly required by settlers.

At a distance of four feet in front of the house holes were dug and poles erected, and to these the framework of the roof was extended. This point was reached ten days after the commencement of the building, and the same evening a native arrived from Mr. Mitford's with a message that the party from Wellington had arrived there and would come over the next day. He also brought a letter to Wilfrid from the Allens, in answer to one he had written them soon after his arrival, saying that they were so pleased with his description of the district they should come down at once, and if it turned out as he described it, take up a tract of land in his neighborhood.

While Wilfrid had been at work he had seen Mr. Atherton several times, as that gentleman had, upon the very day after his first trip up the river, filled up the necessary papers, hired half a dozen natives, and started up the river in a boat freighted with stores to his new location. Wilfrid had not had time to go over to see him there, but he had several times sauntered over from his place, which was half a mile distant, after the day's work was over. He had got up his hut before Wilfrid fairly got to work.

It was, he said, a very modest shanty with but one room, which would serve for all purposes; his cooking being done by a native, for whom he had erected a small shelter twenty yards away from his own.

"I have not quite shaken down yet," he said, "and do not press you to come over to see me until I have got everything into order. I am sure you feel thankful to me that I do not expect you to be tramping over to see

me after your long day's work here. By the time your people arrive I shall have everything in order. I am expecting the things I have written for and my own heavy baggage in a few days from Wellington."

Glad as he was to hear that his father and mother had arrived, Wilfrid would have preferred that their coming should have been delayed until the house was finished and ready for them, and after his first greeting at the waterside he said: "You must not be disappointed, mother, at what you will see. Now everything is in confusion, and the ground is covered with logs and chips. It looked much prettier, I can assure you, when I first saw it, and it will do so again when we have finished and cleared up."

"We will make all allowances, Wilfrid," his mother replied as he helped her from the boat; "but I do not see that any allowance is necessary. This is indeed a sweetly pretty spot, and looks as you said like a park at home. If the trees had been planted with a special view to effect they could not have been better placed."

"You have done excellently, Wilfrid," his father said, putting his hand on his shoulder. "Mr. Mitford here has been telling me how energetically you have been working, and I see that the house has made wonderful progress."

Marion had, after the first greeting, leaped lightly from the boat and run up to the house, toward which the others proceeded at a more leisurely pace, stopping often and looking round at the pleasant prospect. Marion was full of questions to Wilfrid when they arrived. Why were the walls made so thick? How were they going to stop up the crevices between the logs? Where were the windows and doors coming from? What was the roof going to be made of? Was there going to be a floor, or

was the ground inside going to be raised to the level of the door-sill? When did he expect to get it finished, and when would they be ready to come in? Couldn't they get some creepers to run up and hide these ugly logs? Was it to be painted or to remain as it was?

Wilfrid answered all these questions as well as he was able. There was to be a floor over all the new portion of the building; Mr. Mitford was getting up the requisite number of planks from a sawmill at the next settlement. The crevices were to be stopped with moss. It would be for their father to decide whether the logs should be covered with match-boarding inside or out, or whether they should be left as they were at present. It would probably take another fortnight to finish the roof, and at least a week beyond that before the place would be fit for them to move in.

"You see, Marion, I have built it very much on the plan we decided upon on board the ship, only I was obliged to make a change in the position of the kitchen and men's room. The two Grimstones are going to set to work to-morrow to dig up a portion of the plowed land behind the house and sow vegetable seeds. Things grow very fast here, and we shall soon get a kitchen-garden. As to flowers, we shall leave that to be decided when you come here."

"I wish I could come over and live here at once and help," Marion said.

"There is nothing you can help in at present, Marion, and it will be much more useful for you to spend a month in learning things at Mr. Mitford's. You undertook to do the cooking; and I am sure that will be quite necessary, for father and mother could never eat the food our Maori cook turns out. And then you have got to learn to make butter and cheese and to cure bacon. That is a

most important point, for we must certainly keep pigs and cure our own as Mr. Mitford does, for the stuff they have got at most of the places we touched at was almost uneatable. So, you see, there is plenty to occupy your time until you move in here, and our comfort will depend a vast deal upon the pains you take to learn to do things properly."

"What are you going to roof it with, Wilfrid?" Mr. Renshaw asked.

"We are going to use these poles, father. They will be split in two and nailed with the flat side down on the rafters, and the shingles are going to be nailed on them. That will give a good solid roof that will keep out a good deal of heat. Afterward if we like we can put beams across the room from wall to wall and plank them, and turn the space above into a storeroom. Of course that will make the house cooler and the rooms more comfortable, but as it was not absolutely necessary I thought it might be left for awhile."

"I think, Wilfrid, I should like to have the rooms done with boards inside at once. The outside and the ceiling you speak of can very well wait, but it will be impossible to get the rooms to look at all neat and tidy with these rough logs for walls."

"It certainly will be more comfortable," Wilfrid agreed. "Mr. Mitford will get the match-boards for you. I will measure up the walls this evening and let you know how much will be required. And now shall we take a walk round the place?"

The whole party spent a couple of hours in going over the property, with which Mr. and Mrs. Renshaw were greatly pleased. Luncheon had been brought up in the boat, and by the time they returned from their walk Mrs. Mitford and her daughters, who had not accompanied

them, had lunch ready and spread out on the grass. The meal was a merry one. Mr. Renshaw was in high spirits at finding things so much more homelike and comfortable than he had expected. His wife was not only pleased for herself, but still more so at seeing that her husband evinced a willingness to look at matters in the best light, and to enter upon the life before him without regret over the past.

"What are you going to call the place, Mr. Renshaw?" Mrs. Mitford asked. "That is always an important point."

"I have not thought about it," Mr. Renshaw replied. "What do you think?"

"Oh, there are lots of suitable names," she replied, looking round. "We might call it Riverside or The Park or The Glade."

"I think The Glade would be very pretty," Marion said. "Riverside would suit many places."

"I like The Glade too," Mrs. Renshaw said. "Have you thought of anything, Wilfrid?"

"No, mother, I have never given it a thought. I think The Glade will do nicely." And so it was settled, and success to The Glade was thereupon formally drunk in cups of tea.

A month later the Renshaws took possession of their new abode. It looked very neat with its veranda in front of the central portion, and the creepers which Wilfrid had planted against the walls on the day after their visit promised speedily to cover the logs of which the house was built. Inside the flooring had been planed, stained a deep brown and varnished, while the match-boarding which covered the walls was stained a light color and also varnished. The furniture, which had arrived the day before from Hawke's Bay, was somewhat scanty, but

Wilfrid and Marion, who had come over for the purpose, had made the most of it. A square of carpet and some rugs gave a cozy appearance to the floor, white curtains hung before the windows and a few favorite pictures and engravings, which they had brought with them from home, broke the bareness of the walls. Altogether it was a very pretty and snug little abode of which Mr. and Mrs. Renshaw took possession.

CHAPTER XI.

THE HAU-HAUS.

The next three months made a great change in the appearance of The Glade. Three or four plots of gay flowers cut in the grass between the house and the river gave a brightness to its appearance. The house was now covered as far as the roof with greenery, and might well have been mistaken for a rustic bungalow standing in pretty grounds on the banks of the Thames. Behind, a large kitchen-garden was in full bearing. It was surrounded by wire network to keep out the chickens, ducks, and geese, which wandered about and picked up a living as they chose, returning at night to the long, low shed erected for them at some distance from the house, receiving a plentiful meal on their arrival to prevent them from lapsing into an altogether wild condition.

Forty acres of land had been replowed and sown, and the crops had already made considerable progress. In the more distant clearings a dozen horses, twenty or thirty cows, and a small flock of a hundred sheep grazed, while some distance up the glade in which the house stood was the pigsty, whose occupants were fed with refuse from the garden, picking up, however, the larger portion of their living by rooting in the woods.

Long before Mr. and Mrs. Renshaw moved into the house, Wilfrid, whose labors were now less severe, had paid his first visit to Mr. Atherton's hut. He was at once astonished and delighted with it. It contained

indeed but one room, sixteen feet square, but that room had been made one of the most comfortable dens possible. There was no flooring, but the ground had been beaten until it was as hard as baked clay, and was almost covered with rugs and sheepskins; a sort of divan ran round three sides of it, and this was also cushioned with skins. The log walls were covered with cowhides cured with the hair on, and from hooks and brackets hung rifles, fishing rods, and other articles, while horns and other trophies of the chase were fixed to the walls.

While the Renshaws had contented themselves with stoves, Mr. Atherton had gone to the expense and trouble of having a great open fireplace, with a brick chimney outside the wall. Here, even on the hottest day, two or three logs burned upon old-fashioned iron dogs. On the wall above was a sort of trophy of oriental weapons. Two very large and comfortable easy-chairs stood by the side of the hearth, and in the center of the room stood an old oak table, richly carved and black with age. A bookcase of similar age and make, with its shelves well filled with standard works, stood against the one wall unoccupied by the divan.

Wilfrid stood still with astonishment as he looked in at the door, which Mr. Atherton had himself opened in response to his knock.

"Come in, Wilfrid. As I told you yesterday evening I have just got things a little straight and comfortable."

"I should think you had got them comfortable," Wilfrid said. "I should not have thought that a log cabin could have been made as pretty as this. Why, where did you get all the things? Surely you can never have brought them all with you?"

"No, indeed," Mr. Atherton laughed; "the greatest portion of them are products of the country. There was

no difficulty in purchasing the skins, the arms, and those sets of horns and trophies. Books and a few other things I brought with me. I have a theory that people very often make themselves uncomfortable merely to effect the saving of a pound or two. Now, I rather like making myself snug, and the carriage of all those things did not add above five pounds to my expenses."

"But surely that table and bookcase were never made in New Zealand?"

"Certainly not, Wilfrid. At the time they were made the natives of this country hunted the Moa in happy ignorance of the existence of a white race. No, I regard my getting possession of those things as a special stroke of good luck. I was wandering in the streets of Wellington on the very day after my arrival, when I saw them in a shop. No doubt they had been brought out by some well-to-do emigrant, who clung to them in remembrance of his home in the old country. Probably at his death his place came into the hands of some Goths, who preferred a clean deal table to what he considered old-fashioned things. Anyhow, there they were in the shop, and I bought them at once; as also those armchairs, which are as comfortable as anything of the kind I have ever tried. By the way, are you a good shot with the rifle, Wilfrid?"

"No, sir; I never fired a rifle in my life before I left England, nor a shotgun either."

"Then I think you would do well to practice, lad; and those two men of yours should practice too. You never can say what may come of these native disturbances; the rumors of the progress of this new religion among them are not encouraging. It is quite true that the natives on this side of the island have hitherto been perfectly peaceable, but if they get inoculated with this

new religious frenzy there is no saying what may happen. I will speak to your father about it. Not in a way to alarm him; but I will point out that it is of no use your having brought out firearms if none of you know how to use them, and suggest that it will be a good thing if you and the men were to make a point of firing a dozen shots every morning at a mark. I shall add that he himself might just as well do so, and that even the ladies might find it an amusement, using, of course, a light rifle, or firing from a rest with an ordinary rifle with light charges, or that they might practice with revolvers. Anyhow, it is certainly desirable that you and your father and the men should learn to be good shots with these weapons. I will gladly come over at first and act as musketry instructor."

Wilfrid embraced the idea eagerly, and Mr. Atherton on the occasion of his first visit to The Glade in a casual sort of way remarked to Mr. Renshaw that he thought every white man and woman in the outlying colonies ought to be able to use firearms, as, although they might never be called upon to use them in earnest, the knowledge that they could do so with effect would greatly add to their feeling of security and comfort. Mr. Renshaw at once took up the idea and accepted the other's offer to act as instructor. Accordingly, as soon as the Renshaws were established upon their farm, it became one of the standing rules of the place that Wilfrid and the two men should fire twelve shots at a mark every morning before starting for their regular work at the farm.

The target was a figure roughly cut out of wood, representing the size and to some extent the outline of a man's figure.

"It is much better to accustom yourself to fire at a mark of this kind than to practice always at a target,"

Mr. Atherton said. "A man may shoot wonderfully well at a black mark in the center of a white square, and yet make very poor practice at a human figure with its dull shades of color and irregular outline."

"But we shall not be able to tell where our bullets hit," Wilfrid said; "especially after the dummy has been hit a good many times."

"It is not very material where you hit a man, Wilfrid, so that you do hit him. If a man gets a heavy bullet, whether in an arm, a leg, or the body, there is no more fight in him. You can tell by the sound of the bullet if you hit the figure, and if you hit him you have done what you want to. You do not need to practice at distances over three hundred yards; that is quite the outside range at which you would ever want to do any shooting, indeed from fifty to two hundred I consider the useful distance to practice at. If you get to shoot so well that you can with certainty hit a man between those ranges, you may feel pretty comfortable in your mind that you can beat off any attack that might be made on a house you are defending.

"When you have learned to do this at the full-size figure you can put it in a bush so that only the head and shoulders are visible, as would be those of a native standing up to fire. All this white target-work is very well for shooting for prizes, but if troops were trained to fire at dummy figures at from fifty to two hundred yards distance, and allowed plenty of ammunition for practice and kept steadily at it, you would see that a single company would be more than a match for a whole regiment trained as our soldiers are."

With steady practice every morning, Wilfrid and the two young men made very rapid progress, and at the end of three months it was very seldom that a bullet was

thrown away. Sometimes Mr. Renshaw joined them in their practice, but he more often fired a few shots some time during the day with Marion, who became quite an enthusiast in the exercise. Mrs. Renshaw declined to practice, and said that she was content to remain a non-combatant, and would undertake the work of binding up wounds and loading muskets. On Saturday afternoons, when the men left off work somewhat earlier than usual, there was always shooting for small prizes. Twelve shots were fired by each at a figure placed in the bushes a hundred yards away, with only the head and shoulders visible. After each had fired, the shotholes were counted and then filled up with mud, so that the next marks made were easily distinguishable.

Mr. Renshaw was uniformly last. The Grimstones and Marion generally ran each other very close, each putting eight or nine of their bullets into the figure. Wilfrid was always handicapped two shots, but as he generally put the whole of his ten bullets into the mark, he was in the majority of cases the victor. The shooting party was sometimes swelled by the presence of Mr. Atherton and the two Allens, who had arrived a fortnight after the Renshaws, and had taken up the section of land next below them. Mr. Atherton was incomparably the best shot of the party. Wilfrid, indeed, seldom missed, but he took careful and steady aim at the object, while Mr. Atherton fired apparently without waiting to take aim at all. Sometimes he would not even lift his gun to his shoulder, but would fire from his side, or standing with his back to the mark would turn round and fire instantaneously.

"That sort of thing is only attained by long practice," he would say in answer to Wilfrid's exclamations of astonishment. "You see, I have been shooting in differ-

ent parts of the world, and at different sorts of game for some fifteen years, and in many cases quick shooting is of just as much importance as straight shooting."

But it was with the revolver that Mr. Atherton most surprised his friends. He could put six bullets into half a sheet of note-paper at a distance of fifty yards, firing with such rapidity that the weapon was emptied in two or three seconds.

"I learned that," he said, "among the cowboys in the West. Some of them are perfectly marvelous shots. It is their sole amusement, and they spend no inconsiderable portion of their pay on cartridges. It seems to become an instinct with them; however small the object at which they fire they are almost certain to hit it. It is a common thing with them for one man to throw an empty meat-tin into the air and for another to put six bullets in it before it touches the ground. So certain are they of their own and each other's aim, that one will hold a half-penny between his finger and thumb for another to fire at from a distance of twenty yards, and it is a common joke for one to knock another's pipe out of his mouth when he is quietly smoking.

"As you see, though my shooting seems to you wonderful, I should be considered quite a poor shot among the cowboys. Of course, with incessant practice such as they have I should shoot a good deal better than I do; but I could never approach their perfection, for the simple reason that I have not the strength of wrist. They pass their lives in riding half-broken horses, and incessant exercise and hard work harden them until their muscles are like steel, and they scarcely feel what to an ordinary man is a sharp wrench from the recoil of a heavily loaded Colt."

Life was in every way pleasant at The Glade. The

work of breaking up the land went on steadily, but the labor, though hard, was not excessive. In the evening the Allens or Mr. Atherton frequently dropped in, and occasionally Mr. Mitford and his daughters rode over, or the party came up in the boat. The expense of living was small. They had an ample supply of potatoes and other vegetables from their garden, of eggs from their poultry, and of milk, butter, and cheese from their cows. While salt meat was the staple of their food, it was varied occasionally by chickens, ducks, or a goose, while a sheep now and then afforded a week's supply of fresh meat.

Mr. Renshaw had not altogether abandoned his original idea. He had already learned something of the Maori language from his studies on the voyage, and he rapidly acquired a facility of speaking it from his conversations with the two natives permanently employed on the farm. One of these was a man of some forty years old named Wetini, the other was a lad of sixteen, his son, whose name was Whakapanakai, but as this name was voted altogether too long for conversational purposes he was rechristened Jack.

Wetini spoke but a few words of English, but Jack, who had been educated at one of the mission schools, spoke it fluently. They with Wetini's wife, inhabited a small hut situated at the edge of the wood, at a distance of about two hundred yards from the house. It was Mr. Renshaw's custom to stroll over there of an evening, and seating himself by the fire, which however hot the weather the natives always kept burning, he would converse with Wetini upon the manners and customs, the religious beliefs and ceremonies, of his people.

In these conversations Jack at first acted as interpreter, but it was not many weeks before Mr. Renshaw gained

such proficiency in the tongue that such assistance was no longer needed.

But the period of peace and tranquillity at The Glade was but a short one. Wilfrid learned from Jack, who had attached himself specially to him, that there were reports among the natives that the prophet Te Ua was sending out missionaries all over the island. This statement was true. Te Ua had sent out four sub-prophets with orders to travel among the tribes and inform them that Te Ua had been appointed by an angel as a prophet, that he was to found a new religion to be called Pai Marire, and that legions of angels waited the time when, all the tribes having been converted, a general rising would take place, and the Pakeha be annihilated by the assistance of these angels, after which a knowledge of all languages, and of all the arts and sciences, would be bestowed upon the Pai Marire.

Had Te Ua's instructions been carried out, and his agents traveled quietly among the tribes, carefully abstaining from all open hostility to the whites until the whole of the native population had been converted, the rising when it came would have been a terrible one, and might have ended in the whole of the white population being either destroyed or forced for a time to abandon the island. Fortunately the sub-prophets were men of ferocious character. Too impatient to await the appointed time, they attacked the settlers as soon as they collected sufficient converts to do so, and so they brought about the destruction of their leader's plans.

These attacks put the colonists on their guard, enabled the authorities to collect troops and stand on the defensive, and, what was still more important, caused many of the tribes which had not been converted to the Pai Marire faith to range themselves on the side of the Eng-

lish. Not because they loved the whites, but because from time immemorial the tribes had been divided against each other, and their traditional hostility weighed more with them than their jealousy with the white settlers.

Still, although these rumors as to the spread of the Pai Marire or Hau-Hau faith reached the ears of the settlers, there were few in the western provinces who believed that here was any real danger. The Maoris had always been peaceful and friendly with them, and they could not believe that those with whom they had dwelt so long could suddenly and without any reason become bloodthirsty enemies.

Wilfrid said nothing to his parents as to what he had heard from Jack, but he talked it over with Mr. Atherton and the Allens. The latter were disposed to make light of it, but Mr. Atherton took the matter seriously.

"There is never any saying how things will go with the natives," he said. "All savages seem to be alike. Up to a certain point they are intelligent and sensible; but they are like children; they are easily excited, superstitious in the extreme, and can be deceived without the slightest difficulty by designing people. Of course to us this story of Te Ua's sounds absolutely absurd, but that is no reason why it should appear absurd to them. These people have embraced a sort of Christianity, and they have read of miracles of all sorts, and will have no more difficulty in believing that the angels could destroy all the Europeans in their island than that the Assyrian army was miraculously destroyed before Jerusalem.

"Without taking too much account of the business, I think, Wilfrid, that it will be just as well if all of us in these outlying settlements take a certain amount of precautions. I shall write down at once to my agent at

Hawke Bay asking him to buy me a couple of dogs and send them up by the next ship. I shall tell him that it does not matter what sort of dogs they are so that they are good watchdogs, though, of course, I should prefer that they should be decent dogs of their sort, dogs one could make companions of. I should advise you to do the same.

"I shall ask Mr. Mitford to get me up at once a heavy door and shutters for the window, strong enough to stand an assault. Here again I should advise you to do the same. You can assign any reason you like to your father. With a couple of dogs to give the alarm, with a strong door and shutters, you need not be afraid of being taken by surprise, and it is only a surprise that you have in the first place to fear. Of course if there were to be anything like a general rising we should all have to gather at some central spot agreed upon, or else to quit the settlement altogether until matters settle down. Still, I trust that nothing of that sort will take place. At any rate, all we have to fear and prepare against at present is an attack by small parties of fanatics."

Wilfrid had no difficulty in persuading his father to order a strong oak door and shutters for the windows, and to get a couple of dogs. He began the subject by saying: "Mr. Atherton is going to get some strong shutters to his window, father. I think it would be a good thing if we were to get the same for our windows."

"What do we want shutters for, Wilfrid?"

"For just the same reason that we have been learning to use our firearms, father. We do not suppose that the natives, who are all friendly with us, are going to turn treacherous. Still, as there is a bare possibility of such a thing, we have taken some pains in learning to shoot straight. In the same way it would be just as well to

have strong shutters put up. We don't at all suppose we are going to be attacked, but if we are the shutters would be invaluable, and would effectually prevent anything like a night surprise. The expense wouldn't be great, and in the unlikely event of the natives being troublesome in this part of the island we should all sleep much more soundly and comfortably if we knew that there was no fear of our being taken by surprise. Mr. Atherton is sending for a couple of dogs too. I have always thought that it would be jolly to have a dog or two here, and if we do not want them as guards they would be pleasant as companions when one is going about the place."

A few days after the arrival of two large watchdogs and of the heavy shutters and door, Mr. Mitford rode in to The Glade. He chatted for a few minutes on ordinary subjects, and then Mrs. Renshaw said: "Is anything the matter, Mr. Mitford? you look more serious than usual."

"I can hardly say that anything is exactly the matter, Mrs. Renshaw; but I have a batch of newspapers and letters from Wellington this morning, and they give rather stirring news. The Hau-Haus have come into collision with us again. You know that a fortnight since we had news that they had attacked a party of our men under Captain Lloyd and defeated them, and, contrary to all native traditions, had cut off the heads of the slain, among whom was Captain Lloyd himself. I was afraid that after this we should soon hear more of them, and my opinion has been completely justified. On the 1st of May two hundred of the Ngataiwa tribe, and three hundred other natives under Te Ua's prophet Hepanaia and Parengi-Kingi of Taranaki, attacked a strong fort on Sentry Hill, garrisoned by fifty men of the Fifty-second Regiment under Major Short.

"The Ngataiwa took no part in the action, but the Hau-Haus charged with great bravery. The garrison fortunately being warned by their yells of what was coming, received them with such a heavy fire that their leading ranks were swept away, and they fell back in confusion. They made a second charge, which was equally unsuccessful, and then fell back with a loss of fifty-two killed, among whom were both the Hau-Hau prophet and Parengi-Kingi.

"The other affair has taken place in the Wellington district. Matene, another of the Hau-Hau prophets, came down to Pipiriki, a tribe of the Wanganui. These people were bitterly hostile to us, as they had taken part in some of the former fighting, and their chief and thirty six of his men were killed. The tribe at once accepted the new faith. Mr. Booth, the resident magistrate, who was greatly respected among them, went up to try to smooth matters down, but was seized, and would have been put to death if it had not been for the interference in his favor of a young chief named Hori Patene, who managed to get him and his wife and children safely down in a canoe to the town of Wagnai. The Hau-Haus prepared to move down the river to attack the town, and sent word to the Ngatihau branch of the tribe who lived down the river to join them. They and two other of the Wanganui tribes living on the lower part of the river refused to do so, and also refused to let them pass down the river, and sent a challenge for a regular battle to take place on the island of Moutoa in the river.

"The challenge was accepted. At dawn on the following morning our natives, three hundred and fifty strong, proceeded to the appointed ground. A hundred picked men crossed on to the island, and the rest remained on the banks as spectators. Of the hundred, fifty divided

into three parties each under a chief, formed the advance guard, while the other fifty remained in reserve at the end of the island two hundred yards away, and too far to be of much use in the event of the advance guard being defeated. The enemy's party were a hundred and thirty strong, and it is difficult to understand why a larger body was not sent over to the island to oppose them, especially as the belief in the invulnerability of the Hau-Haus was generally believed in, even by the natives opposed to them.

"It was a curious fight, quite in the manner of the traditional warfare between the various tribes before our arrival on the island. The lower tribesmen fought, not for the defense of the town, for they were not very friendly with the Europeans, having been strong supporters of the king party, but simply for the prestige of the tribe. No hostile war party had ever forced the river, and none ever should do so. The Hau-Haus came down the river in their canoes and landed without opposition. Then a party of the Wanganui advance guard fired. Although the Hau-Haus were but thirty yards distant none of them fell, and their return volley killed the chiefs of two out of the three sections of the advance guard and many others.

"Disheartened by the loss of their chiefs, the two sections gave way, shouting that the Hau-Haus were invulnerable. The third section, well led by their chief, held their ground, but were driven slowly back by the overwhelming force of the enemy. The battle appeared to be lost, when Tamehana, the sub-chief of one of the flying sections, after vainly trying to rally his men, arrived on the ground, and, refusing to obey the order to take cover from the Hau-Haus' fire, dashed at the enemy and killed two of them with his double-barreled gun. The

last of the three leaders was at this moment shot dead. Nearly all his men were more or less severely wounded, but as the Hau-Haus rushed forward they fired a volley into them at close quarters, killing several. But they still came on, when Tamehana again rushed at them. Seizing the spear of a dead man he drove it into the heart of a Hau-Hau. Catching up the gun and tomahawk of the fallen man, he drove the latter so deeply into the head of another foe that in wrenching it out the handle was broken. Finding that the gun was unloaded, he dashed it in the face of his foes, and snatching up another he was about to fire, when a bullet struck him in the arm. Nevertheless he fired and killed his man, but the next moment was brought to the ground by a bullet that shattered his knee.

"At this moment Hainoma, who commanded the reserve, came up with them, with the fugitives whom he had succeeded in rallying. They fired a volley, and then charged down upon the Hau-Haus with their tomahawks. After a desperate fight the enemy were driven in confusion to the upper end of the island, where they rushed into the water and attempted to swim to the right bank. The prophet was recognized among the swimmers. One of the Wangenui plunged in after him, overtook him just as he reached the opposite bank, and in spite of the prophet uttering the magic words that should have paralyzed his assailant, killed him with his tomahawk and swam back with the body to Hainoma."

"They seem to have been two serious affairs," Mr. Renshaw said; "but as the Hau-Haus were defeated in each we may hope that we have heard the last of them, for as both the prophets were killed the belief in the invulnerability of Te Ua's followers must be at an end."

"I wish I could think so," Mr. Mitford said; "but it

is terribly hard to kill a superstition. Te Ua will, of course, say that the two prophets disobeyed his positive instructions and thus brought their fate upon themselves, and the incident may therefore rather strengthen than decrease his influence. The best part of the business in my mind is that some of the tribes have thrown in their lot on our side, or if not actually on our side at any rate against the Hau-Haus. After this we need hardly fear any general action of the natives against us. There are all sorts of obscure alliances between the tribes arising from marriages, or from their having fought on the same side in some far-back struggle. The result is that the tribes who have these alliances with the Wanganui will henceforth range themselves on the same side, or will at any rate hold aloof from this Pai Marire movement. This will also force other tribes, who might have been willing to join in a general movement, to stand neutral, and I think now, that although we may have a great deal of trouble with Te Ua's followers, we may regard any absolute danger to the European population of the island as past.

"There may, I fear, be isolated massacres, for the Hau-Haus, with their cutting off of heads and carrying them about, have introduced an entirely new and savage feature into Maori warfare. I was inclined to think the precautions you and Atherton are taking were rather superfluous, but after this I shall certainly adopt them myself. Everything is perfectly quiet here, but when we see how readily a whole tribe embrace the new religion as soon as a prophet arrives, and are ready at once to massacre a man who had long dwelt among them, and for whom they had always evinced the greatest respect and liking, it is impossible any longer to feel confident that the natives in this part of the country are to be relied upon as absolutely friendly and trustworthy.

"I am sorry now that I have been to some extent the means of inducing you all to settle here. At the time I gave my advice things seemed settling down at the other end of the island, and this Hau-Hau movement reached us only as a vague rumor, and seemed so absurd in itself that one attached no importance to it."

"Pray do not blame yourself, Mr. Mitford; whatever comes of it we are delighted with the choice we have made. We are vastly more comfortable than we had expected to be in so short a time, and things look promising far beyond our expectations. As you say, you could have had no reason to suppose that this absurd movement was going to lead to such serious consequences. Indeed you could have no ground for supposing that it was likely to cause trouble on this side of the island, far removed as we are from the scene of the troubles. Even now these are in fact confined to the district where fighting has been going on for the last three or four years—Taranaki and its neighborhood; for the Wanganui river, although it flows into the sea in the north of the Wellington district, rises in that of Taranaki, and the tribes who became Hau-Haus and came down the river had already taken part in the fighting with our troops. I really see no reason, therefore, for fearing that it will spread in this direction."

"There is no reason whatever," Mr. Mitford agreed; "only, unfortunately, the natives seldom behave as we expect them to do, and generally act precisely as we expect they will not act. At any rate I shall set to work at once to construct a strong stockade at the back of my house. I have long been talking of forming a large cattle-yard there, so that it will not in any case be labor thrown away, while if trouble should come it will serve as a rallying place to which all the settlers of the dis-

trict can drive in their horses and cattle for shelter, and where they can if attacked hold their own against all the natives of the districts."

"I really think you are looking at it in almost too serious a light, Mr. Mitford; still, the fact that there is such a rallying place in the neighborhood will of course add to our comfort in case we should hear alarming rumors."

"Quite so, Mr. Renshaw. My idea is there is nothing like being prepared, and though I agree with you that there is little chance of trouble in this remote settlement, it is just as well to take precautions against the worst."

CHAPTER XII.

THE FIRST ALARM.

One morning Mr. and Mrs. Renshaw went down to spend a long day with the Mitfords. The latter had sent up the boat overnight, and they started the first thing in the morning. For the two or three days previous Jack, the young native, had more than once spoken to Wilfrid of the propriety of the hands keeping near the house, but Wilfrid had failed to obtain from him any specific reasons for the warning.

"Bad men come down from Waikato," he said. "Much talkee talkee among natives."

"But what do they talk about, Jack?"

Jack shook his head.

"Jack no hear talkee. Men come to hut and talk with father. Other Maoris on land steal in and talk too, but no talk before Jack; always turn him out or send him on errand. But Jack hear sometimes a word, and think that trouble come. Young master better not go far away by himself, and tell two white men to keep close to hut. Perhaps nothing come, but better to be on guard."

"Very well, Jack; I am obliged to you for the warning. I will tell the Grimstones not to go out to the outlying clearings, but to occupy themselves with what they can find to do near home."

Jack nodded. "That best, Master Wilfrid, but no talk too much with me. If my people thought I speak to you then trouble come to Jack."

Wilfrid nodded, and without saying anything to his father and mother told the Grimstones to keep near the house. "After you have done shooting of a morning," he said, "instead of bringing your guns into the house as usual take them down with you to the place where you are at work, so that they will be handy in case of necessity. Most likely there is no danger whatever; but I have heard a rumor that some people from Waikato have come into this neighborhood, and if so no doubt they are trying to get the tribes here to join the Hau-Haus. I do not think that there is much chance of their succeeding, for the natives have always been very friendly, and there has been no dispute about land or any other grievance; but when one knows how suddenly they have risen in other places it is better to take precautions."

After breakfast on the morning when his father and mother had started, Wilfrid strolled out on to the veranda, and stood for some little time hesitating what he should do. The Grimstones had just started to look up some cattle in one of the distant clearings, one of the native hands having reported the evening before two of the animals were missing.

"I will not go far till they come back, he said to himself. "The garden wants hoeing. Weeds grow as fast here as they do at home. That will be just the job for me."

He was about to turn to enter the house when he saw four natives emerge from the trees and make toward him.

"Marion," he said through the open door, "get the guns down from the rack, and see that they are capped and ready. There are four natives coming toward the house. I dare say they are friendly, and are probably only on the way down to the river to look for work. Still, as we are alone you cannot be too careful."

Hearing Marion reply "All right, Wilfrid!" the lad leaned against the door in a careless attitude and awaited the coming of the natives. As they approached he saw they were all strangers to him, although he knew most of the natives in the neighborhood by sight, for these not unfrequently came in to barter a pig or a sheep for tobacco, sugar, or other things necessary to them. The natives as they came up gave the usual salutation of good-day, to which Wilfrid replied.

"We are hungry," a tall Maori, who by his dress appeared to be a chief, said.

"I will get you something to eat," Wilfrid answered.

The Maoris would have followed into the house, but he stopped and said sharply, "We do not allow strangers in the house. Those we know are free to enter and depart as they choose, but I have not seen any of you before. If you will sit down on that bench outside I will bring you food."

He soon reappeared with a dish of maize and boiled pork, for a supply was generally kept in readiness in case any of the natives should come in.

"Shuffle about and make a noise," he said to Marion as she got the dish from the cupboard. "They cannot know who are inside, and if they mean mischief—and honestly I do not like their looks—they will be more likely to try it on if they think that I am alone."

The Maoris took the food in silence, and as they ate it Wilfrid was amused to hear Marion stamping heavily about inside, and occasionally speaking as if to her father. He could see that the men were listening, and they exchanged words in a low tone with each other.

Presently the leader of the party said, "Drink!" Wilfrid went in and brought out a pitcher of water. "Gin!" the chief said shortly.

Maori. MARION COVERS THE NATIVE WITH HER RIFLE.—Page 203.

"I have no gin to give you," Wilfrid replied; "we do not keep spirits."

The natives rose to their feet. "We will come in and see," the leader said.

"No, you won't!" Wilfrid said firmly. "I have given you what food there is in the house, and you are welcome to it; but strangers don't come into the house unless they are invited."

The native laid his hand on Wilfrid's shoulder to push him aside, but four months of chopping and digging had hardened every muscle in the lad's body. He did not move an inch, but jerked the Maori's hand off his shoulder.

With an exclamation of anger the native drew a heavy knobbed stick from the girdle round his waist, but before he could raise it to strike another figure appeared at the door. Marion held a gun in her hand which she raised to her shoulder. "Drop that," she said, in a clear, ringing voice, "or I fire!"

Taken by surprise, and seeing the rifle pointed full at his head, the chief instantly dropped his club. At the same instant Wilfrid sprang to the door, exclaiming "Go in, Marion!" and before the natives had recovered from their surprise the door was shut and barred.

They had not been deceived by Marion's attempt to personate a man, and their sharp ears had told them while eating their meal that there was but one person in the house, and that it was a girl. They knew that there was no other about, having watched the house for some time, and had therefore anticipated that the work of murder and plunder would be accomplished without difficulty. The instant the door was closed they bounded away at the top of their speed to the shelter of the bush, expecting every moment to hear the report of a rifle behind them; but the Renshaws had not thought of firing.

"Well done, Marion!" Wilfrid exclaimed, as soon as the door was fastened. "I was on the point of springing upon him when I heard your voice behind me; I think that I could have tripped him backward, but if I had done so the others would have been upon me with their clubs. Now, let us close and fasten the shutters, though I do not think we need have any fear of their coming back. In each case we have heard of they have always fallen on the settlers suddenly and killed them before they had time for resistance, and I do not think there is a chance of their trying to attack us now that they know we are ready for them. I expect that they were passing down to some of their people below, and seeing, as they thought, a defenseless hut, thought it would be an easy business to plunder it and knock on the head any one they might find here. Now that they have failed they will probably go on their journey again."

"I was horribly frightened, Wilfrid," Marion said, when they joined each other in the sitting-room after making all the fastenings secure.

"You did not look frightened a bit, Marion; and you certainly gave that fellow a tremendous scare. Didn't he drop his club sharp? And now, what do you think we had better do? The first thing is to get the Grimstones in. Those fellows may have been watching for some time and saw them go out."

"But they have got their guns with them, Wilfrid. The natives would surely not think of attacking two men with guns when they have nothing but their clubs."

"No, they certainly would not think of doing that, Marion. But the chances are that they have got guns, and that they left them in the bush when they sallied out, as they wanted to look peaceful and take us by surprise."

"I did not think of that, Wilfrid. Yes, perhaps they have guns. Well, you know, it has always been agreed that in case of danger three shots should be fired as a warning to those who might be out. If we fire and they hear it they will hurry back."

"Yes, but they might be shot as they make their way down to the house; that is what I am afraid of."

Marion was silent for a minute. "Do you know where they have gone to, Wilfrid?"

"They have gone in the first place to the clearing with those two big trees standing in the center, but I cannot say where they may go afterward, for they had to look for four or five of the cattle that had strayed away."

"I can slip out from the window in the men's room and get into the bush and work round to the clearing, Wilfrid, and fire three shots there; that would bring them to me at once. You see, the natives couldn't cross the clearing here without your having them under your gun."

"No, Marion," Wilfrid said decidedly; "that is not to be thought of. If they saw you going they could work up through the bush on their side to the top of the clearing, and then follow you. No; I think I will fire the three shots. We have talked it over several times, you know, and the Grimstones have been told that if they heard the alarm they must make their way cautiously to the top of the clearing and see what is going on before they venture to make for the house. As soon as I see them I can shout to them to keep to the bush on their left till they get opposite the house. Everything is so still that one can hear a shout a long way, and I feel sure I could make them understand as far off as the end of the clearing. It isn't as if we were sure that these fellows were still hanging about ready to attack us;

the probabilities are all the other way. They would have murdered us if they could have taken us by surprise, but that is a different thing altogether to making an attack now they know we are armed and ready."

Taking three of the rifles, Wilfrid opened one of the shutters at the back of the house and fired them, with an interval of about five seconds between each shot; then he stood at the window and watched the upper end of the glade. "Dear me!" he exclaimed suddenly, "I am sorry we fired."

"Why?" Marion asked in surprise.

"Because Mr. Atherton is sure to hear it if he is at home, and will come hurrying over; and if these fellows are still there he may come right into the middle of them."

"I do not think he would do that, Wilfrid," Marion said, after thinking for a moment or two. "Mr. Atherton is not like the Grimstones. He has been in all sorts of adventures, and though I am sure he will come to our help as soon as he can, I think he would take every precaution. He would know that the natives will be likely to come from above, and therefore be between him and us, and would come along carefully so as not to be surprised."

"I hope so, I am sure," Wilfrid said; for he is an awfully good fellow. Still, as you say, he is sure to keep his eyes opened, and unless they surprise him I should back him against the four of them."

In a quarter of an hour they heard a shout from the edge of the clearing. "There are the Allens!" Wilfrid exclaimed as he leaped to the door. "I forgot about them, although of course they are nearer than Mr. Atherton. All right!" he shouted; "you can come on." The two Allens ran across the open space between the wood and the house.

"What is it, Wilfrid?" they exclaimed as they came up. "You fired the alarm signal, did you not?" Both were breathless with the speed at which they had run. They had been engaged in felling when they heard the shots, and had thrown down their axes, run into the hut for their guns, and made for The Glade at the top of their speed. In a few words Wilfrid explained what had happened, and that there was every reason to believe that four hostile neighbors were lurking in the bush on the opposite side of the glade. The Allens at once volunteered to go up to the head of the clearing to warn the Grimstones. Returning to the point where they had left the forest, they made their way among the trees until they reached the upper end of the clearing; then sat down and listened. In a few minutes they heard the sound of breaking twigs. "Here come the men," the elder Allen said; "the Maoris would come along noiselessly." Two or three minutes later the Grimstones came up at a run, accompanied by their two dogs.

"This way," James Allen said.

"What is it, sir?" Bob Grimstone gasped. "We were a long way in the woods when we thought we heard three shots. We were not quite sure about it, but we started back as fast as we could come. There is nothing wrong, I hope?"

"Fortunately nothing has happened," James Allen replied; "but four strange Maoris came up to the house and would certainly have murdered Mr. Wilfrid and his sister if they had not been prepared for them. Whether they are in the bush now or not I do not know; but we have come up to warn you not to go up the clearing, as if they are there they might pick you off as you did so. We must come down under shelter of the trees till we are opposite the house."

In ten minutes they reached the house. Just as they did so Mr. Atherton appeared at the edge of the wood which they had just left.

"Thank God you are all safe!" he said as he strolled up to the house. "Your three shots gave me a fright; but as I heard no more I was relieved, for the signal told that you had not been taken by surprise, and as there was no more firing it was clear they had drawn off."

"But how did you get to that side of the clearing, Mr. Atherton?"

"I followed the wood till within a few hundred yards of the clearing, as I made sure if there were hostile natives about they would be at the edge of the bush. Then I got down into the river and waded along the edge. The bank in front here was not high enough to hide me, though I stooped as much as I could; but I reckoned that all eyes would be fixed on the house, and it was not likely I should be noticed. And now, what is it all about? I am sure you would not have fired the signal unless there had been good cause for the alarm."

Wilfrid related what had taken place.

"Well done, Miss Marion!" Mr. Atherton said when he had finished. "It was lucky for your brother that you did not go with your father and mother this morning."

"It was lucky," Wilfrid agreed; "but at the same time, if I had been quite alone I should have closed the shutters and door as they came up, and kept indoors. I only ventured to meet them outside because I knew that Marion had a gun ready to hand to me the moment I wanted it."

"Yes; but you see there was not time to hand you the gun, Wilfrid, as it turned out, and you would have been knocked on the head to a certainty if your sister had not come to your rescue."

"That I certainly should; and I know that I owe Marion my life. What do you think we had better do now?"

"I do not think we can do anything, Wilfrid, beyond trying to find out whether the fellows who came here were alone, or were part of larger party. Where are your natives?"

"The three men are chopping, and Jack went out with the Grimstones to look for the cattle."

"Was he with you when you heard the shots fired, Bob?"

"He was with us a minute or two before, and was following a track. After we heard the signal we did not think anything more about him, and whether he followed us or went on looking after the cattle I do not know."

"If you go to the door, Wilfrid, and give a loud cooey it will bring him in if he is within hearing. You may be sure that he heard the signal, for his ears are keener than those of your men; but he would not rush straight back, but would come cautiously through the woods according to his nature."

Wilfrid went to the door and gave a loud cooey. A minute later the Maori issued from the bush, nearly opposite the house, and ran in.

"That's just where the natives took to the bush," Wilfrid said. "Perhaps he will be able to tell us something about them."

"I expect he has been scouting," Mr. Atherton said, "and his coming boldly out from that point is a pretty sure proof that the natives have made off. Well, Jack, so you heard our signal?"

Jack nodded.

"And what have you been doing since?" Wilfrid asked.

"Jack went through the bush fast till he got near house, then, as the guns were not going off, he knew there could be no attack; but thought black man might be lying in bush, so he crept and crawled. Presently he heard man talk, and then saw four Maori walking fast away from house. He only heard them say as he passed, 'No use now; too many Pakehas. Come another day and finish them all.' Jack was coming straight to house when he heard cooey."

"You have seen nothing of your father and the other two men, Jack?"

The Maori boy shook his head. "They chop wood; perhaps not heard signal."

"More likely they heard, but thought it better to stay away," Wilfrid said.

"No got guns; they not fighting men," Jack said, as if in excuse.

"There is something in that," Mr. Atherton said. "The Hau-Haus have always proved themselves even more merciless toward the friendly natives than toward the whites; and these men, being unarmed, might even with the best disposition in the world be afraid to come to the house. At any rate, I am glad those fellows have made off. You see, they were in a position to shoot any of us as if they got the chance, while we were scarce in a position to return the compliment."

"Why not?" James Allen asked.

"Because, although we could have now no doubt whatever as to their intentions, the have committed no actual assault. They tried their best to push their way into the house, and when Wilfrid opposed them one of them drew his club; but they might say this was only done to frighten him, and that they had no thought of using it. If they had fired a shot, we should of course be justified

in killing them; but were we to begin the shooting, the whole tribe they belong to would take it up, and there would be a cry for vengeance; and even if nothing were done at once, we should be marked down to be wiped out at the first opportunity.

"We shall learn in a day or two whether the matter was serious or not," Mr. Atherton went on. "If there is anything like a general defection of the natives in these parts yours will not have been the only place threatened, and we shall hear of attacks on other settlers. If we do not hear of such attacks we can safely put it down that these four fellows were mere haphazard passers, like tramps at home, who were tempted by the fact that the house contained only two persons. In that case we need feel no further anxiety; for as you would be able to recognize them if you met them anywhere, they would not be likely to come near this part of the district again. At any rate I will set off with the boy here and one of the dogs, and will follow up their tracks and see if they have gone well away. I have no doubt they have done so; still, it will be more comfortable to make certain of it."

"By the way, Bob," Wilfrid said, "don't you take those two dogs out again. I don't think they would be any good for hunting cattle, and would be much more likely to frighten and hunt them away than to help you to drive them in. At any rate they were bought as guards, and are to remain about the house. Shall I go with you, Mr. Atherton?"

"No, thank you, Wilfrid; Jack will be enough to help me follow the tracks, for what he heard them say is almost proof that they have gone. I shall go round to my own place when I have followed them fairly off the land, but will come round here to-morrow morning,

when we will hold a general council of war. It is no use my coming back again this evening, as your father and the others will not be here before that time. It is possible that they will bring us some news from the Mitfords. If there is any trouble anywhere along the river Mitford is sure to be the first to hear it. I will send a message back by Jack when he has gone as far as necessary for our purpose."

Two hours later Jack returned with the news that the Maoris had gone straight on without making a stop. Mr. and Mrs. Renshaw were expected back at about ten o'clock. They were to breakfast early at the Mitfords and to come up with their light canoe. They arrived, however, soon after eight o'clock.

"Is all well?" Mr. Renshaw shouted as he stepped from the boat.

"All well, father," Marion replied, running down to meet them. "We had a little unpleasantness yesterday, but nothing of consequence. What brings you back so early? You must have started before daylight."

"Bad news came in yesterday evening, and we should have come straight over if it had been possible, but Mr. Mitford would not let us leave till morning. We have been very anxious about you."

"What is the news?" Wilfred asked.

"The natives murdered two settlers at a farm some four miles from Mr. Mitford's. Yesterday he received letters both from Poverty Bay and Napier saying that the natives were in a very disturbed state, that Hau-Hau prophets had been going about among them, and that in both districts there had been several murders. Corps of volunteers are being raised at Napier, and they have sent to Wellington for a company of the constabulary. The settlers at Poverty Bay are also making preparations for

defense. Mr. Mitford was asked to get all the colonists on this river to arm and prepare for an attack. Of course this news was very alarming in itself, and when two or three hours later the news came in of the murders in our own settlement we were naturally most anxious about you. However, as we could not come over in the dark through the forest, and as Mitford pointed out that the house was well prepared for defense, and that you would certainly be on the alert and had the dogs, who would give you notice of any body of men coming, we consented to remain if he would send us home in the canoe at five o'clock in the morning. And now, what is it that happened here yesterday?"

"It was nothing very alarming, father. Four natives came up and asked for food, which of course I gave them. Then they wanted gin, and seeing that I was alone tried to push their way into the house. I tried to stop them. The fellow snatched at his club. As he did so Marion appeared at the door with a leveled rifle, and the fellows, who had no guns with them, took to their heels. We gave the alarm signal, and the Allens and Mr. Atherton came over at once, and the Grimstones ran in from their work. However, the natives had made their way off, and I do not suppose we shall hear any more of them."

"I don't know, Wilffrid," his father said. "If it had been only this affair I should not have thought much about it. The natives are often rude and insolent, and these men might not have meant to do more than help themselves to a bottle of spirits, but taken with these accounts from Napier and Poverty Bay, and with the murders yesterday, I think it is very serious."

"Mr. Atherton and the Allens promised to come over at ten o'clock, father, to chat the matter over with you,

and hear whether you had brought news of any troubles elsewhere. So we shall have quite a council. And now let us have breakfast. We were just going to sit down when we heard your call, and I am sure you must be as hungry as hunters after your three hours on the water."

Breakfast was scarcely finished when Mr. Atherton and the Allens arrived, and were made acquainted with the news of the murder of the two setttlers on the previous day.

"It is clear," Mr. Atherton said, "that the affair here yesterday, was not, as I hoped, a mere incident, such as might happen anywhere if a party of ruffianly fellows arrived at a lonely house which they thought they could rob with impunity. This sad business you tell us of shows that there is a general movement among the natives, the result, I suppose, of the arrival of some emissary from the Hau-Haus. It is an awkward business. What is Mr. Mitford's opinion on the subject?"

"He thinks it will be well that all settlers on the river capable of bearing arms should be enrolled as a volunteer corps, and be in readiness to turn out at a moment's notice. He is of opinion that all those whose farms lie at a distance from the main body should drive in their animals and bring in such goods as they can carry to his station, as one of the most central. Huts could be got up there, and the animals all kept at night in his large stockaded yard. In case the natives seem inclined to make a regular attack the women and children could be sent down the river in boats or put on board a ship and sent to Napier. Fortunately, there is seldom a week without a craft of some sort putting into the river."

"There is no doubt that this would be the safest plan," Mr. Atherton said, "but it would be a serious thing for the settlers to abandon their crops and houses to the

natives unless it was certain that the danger was very great."

"That is my opinion," Mr. Renshaw said. "I am certainly not disposed to have the results of our labor destroyed without a struggle."

Wilfrid looked alike surprised and pleased. "I am glad to hear you say so father. It would be an awful nuisance and loss to have all our crops destroyed and our house burned down, and to have to begin the whole thing over again. I don't see what would have been the use of getting everything ready for defense if we are all to run away directly there is danger; but I think it would be a good thing to send the animals down to Mr. Mitford's, as he is good enough to offer to take them. We might send down the three natives to look after them, as of course they will have to go out to graze in the daytime, and keep Jack here. I do not know about the other men, and one doesn't seem able to trust the natives in the slightest; but I feel sure of Jack, and he would be useful to us in many ways in the house, beside being able to scout in the woods far better than we could do."

"I think that you are right, Mr. Renshaw," Mr. Atherton said. "I should propose as an addition that the Allens here and I make this our headquarters while the scare lasts. We could run up a light shanty with a few hours' work just behind the house. The Allens could go over to their work during the day and return here at night, and I should wander about the woods with my gun as usual. I do not think we need fear any attack in the daytime. If it comes at all it will be at night or at early morning. The natives will know from the men who were here that you are well armed, and will try to catch you napping. We won't be any more trouble to you than we can help, and with the addition of our three

guns I think we could defend ourselves against any number of natives. What do you think of my proposal, lads?"

The Allens said at once that they thought it was an excellent one, if Mr. and Mrs. Renshaw were willing to have the trouble of them.

"It will be no trouble at all," Mrs. Renshaw said, "and will be a very great comfort. With seven men to protect us Marion and I shall feel perfectly safe, and it will be in all ways pleasant to have you here with us. I do not see that you need build a hut outside at all. There will be no difficulty in making up beds here and in the kitchen, and then we shall be all together."

"But I do not propose that you should cook for us, Mrs. Renshaw. If we had a hut of our own our boys could do that for us. You see, we are coming up here for our own defense as well as yours."

"I should not think of such a thing," Mrs. Renshaw said decidedly. "There is no more trouble in cooking for nine than there is for six; and, as I have said, it will be a real pleasure to us to have you stopping here."

"Very well. Then in that case, Mrs. Renshaw, we will accept your invitation. I will bring over my belongings to-day and store them in your loft above, and the Allens had better bring over anything they do not want burned by the natives. I still hope that these outrages are the work of a few ruffians, and that the natives in general will not allow themselves to be persuaded into hostilities against us; still, if the worst comes to the worst, I am convinced that we can hold this house against quite as strong a force as they are likely to bring to attack it. There is one precaution I should advise you to take at once, and that is to lay in a store of water. I dare say you have got some empty molasses and pork casks,

that it if you not not burn them as soon as you empty them. If not we must set to work and make a strong wooden tank. In case we were really besieged, it would be fatal to us if we were caught without a supply of water."

Fortunately there were three or four empty casks. These were taken down to the river and thoroughly washed, filled with water, and rolled up to the house. While this was being done, Wilfrid, with the Grimstones and the natives, had gone out and driven in all the animals from the clearings, and as soon as they were brought in Wilfrid with the natives started to drive them to Mr. Mitford's. Mr. Atherton went over to his hut, and before night his two natives had brought over all his most valuable property, and the next day his hut was completely stripped. The Allens only brought over a few things. Their furniture was rough and heavy, and they contented themselves by carrying it out into the forest near and hiding it in the undergrowth. Wilfrid returned to The Glade in the evening. He said that many of the settlers had come in, and were erecting shelters of hides, canvas, and wood near Mr. Mitford's house. The men were all being enrolled. Officers had been appointed, and the natives were likely to meet with a stout resistance if they ventured on hostilities.

Mrs. Mitford had sent an earnest invitation to Mrs. Renshaw and Marion to take up their abode with her. Mr. Mitford had approved of their intention of holding the house. He knew its capabilities of defense and thought that, unless taken by surprise, they would be able to hold it.

"It will be a sort of outpost for the colony," he said, "and will add to our safety; for if any strong body of natives were approaching they would probably attack

you before coming on here. The instant we hear that you are attacked we will come up to aid you. We shall be able to muster in all something like fifty mounted men—a strength sufficient to meet any number of natives likely to assemble in these parts."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ATTACK ON THE GLADE.

For three days things went on quietly at The Glade. The first thing in the morning Jack went out with two of the dogs and scouted in the bush. As soon as he returned with the news that he could find no signs of natives the household broke up. The Allens went through the bush to their clearing and continued their work of felling trees. Mr. Atherton sauntered off with his two dogs into the forest in search of plants. Wilfrid and the Grimstones pursued their work of digging and planting in the upper part of the glade. Jack and the two dogs were on watch round the house. Mr. Renshaw worked at his Maori vocabulary, and his wife and daughter carried on the business of the house.

At night two of the dogs were chained up outside; the other two slept in the kitchen, while Jack was allowed to sleep up in the loft. At daybreak on the fourth day the party were awoke by a growl from one of the dogs outside. Each of the occupants of the house had been allotted his post, and in a minute all were standing rifle in hand, at the windows they were to guard. Mr. Atherton opened the front door and went out, followed by Jack. It was just getting light enough to make out objects in the clearing. Everything seemed quiet.

"What is it, Ponto?" he said to his dog, who was standing with his eyes fixed upon the bush to the right,

his ears pricked and his hair bristling. "What do you hear, old fellow?"

The dog uttered another deep growl. A moment later there was a loud yell. A number of dark figures leaped from the edge of the bush and ran toward the house. They had made out Mr. Atherton's figure, and knew that their hope of surprising the place was at an end. Mr. Atherton leveled his rifle and fired, and one of the natives fell dead. Then stooping he quietly unfastened the dog's chain from his collar, telling Jack to do the same to the other dog, "Come into the house, sir," he ordered; "it's no use your being here to be shot."

His shot had been answered by a dozen rifles, but fired in haste, as the men were running, none of the bullets struck him. Four shots were fired simultaneously from the windows looking toward the bush, and three more natives fell. This proof of the accuracy of the defenders' shooting staggered the Maoris and they paused for a moment, then, moved by the exhortations of their chief, they again rushed forward. The whole of the defenders were now gathered at the windows facing them, and seven shots were fired in quick succession. Three natives fell dead. Four others were wounded, two so seriously that they had to be carried off by their comrades, who at once ran back to the bush, and from its edge opened a straggling fire against the house. The shutters that had been thrown open at the two windows were at once closed.

"This is what I call beating them off handsomely," Mr. Atherton said. "Now you see the advantage, Wilfrid, of the pains you have taken to learn to shoot straight. There have been only eleven shots fired, and I fancy there are at least ten casualties among them. I call that a very pretty average for young hands."

"What will they do next, do you think?" Mr. Renshaw asked.

"They will not try another open attack, I fancy. We may expect them to try to work round us. Jack, do you go to the other side of the house and keep a sharp lookout on t e bush there. Wilfrid, you take post at the windows we fired from, and peep out from time to time through the loopholes in the shutters. Between times keep yourself out of the line of fire. The betting is a thousand to one against a bullet coming through, still there is no use in running any risk if it can be avoided. Jim Allen, you and I will take up our place at the back of the house; they may try to work up among the crops. In fact, I expect that is the course they will take unless they have had enough of it already. Bob Grimstone, you keep watch at one of the front windows. I don't think there is much chance of attack from that side, but it is as well to keep a lookout. Some of them may attempt to cross to the opposite bush, keeping down by the river. The other three guns will be in reserve."

"Don't you think they are likely to go away now that they have suffered so much loss?" Mrs. Renshaw asked.

"No, I cannot say I think so, Mrs. Renshaw. The Maoris, from what I have heard, always try to get revenge for the death of a kinsman or fellow-tribesman. Of course it depends how many of them there are. I should judge that there were about thirty showed themselves. If that is all there are of them I should say they would not attack again at present. They must know by our firing that there are seven or eight of us here. But I should not rely altogether even upon that, for the natives regard themselves as fully a match, man for man, with the whites, and in their fights with our troops we were often greatly superior in numbers. Still, it is one thing

to defend a strong pah and another to attack resolute men snugly sheltered behind bullet-proof logs. They may try again, but if there are any more of their people within reasonable distance I fancy they will be more likely to send for them and keep a sharp watch round us until they come up. Now I will go to my post."

For a quarter of an hour the two watchers at the back of the house saw no signs of life. Then Mr. Atherton said: "There is a movement among that corn, Jim. Do you see, there—just in a line with that big tree at the other end of the clearing? It is moving in several places. Call your brother and young Grimstone to this side of the house, and do you all take steady aim at these moving patches. I will fire first. I think I can pretty well mark the spot where one of the fellows is making his way down. If I hit him the others are likely enough to start up. Then will be your time for taking a shot at them."

As soon as the others were in position and ready Mr. Atherton fired. There was a yell. A dark figure sprang up, stood for an instant, and then fell back. Almost at the same instant half a dozen others leaped to their feet and dashed away. Three rifles were fired. Two of the natives fell, but one almost immediately rose again and followed the others.

"You ought to have done better than that at a hundred yards," Mr. Atherton said. "You two lads ought to have practiced a little more steadily than you have. It was Grimstone brought down that man. His rifle went off a second before yours, and the man was falling when you fired. The great thing in firing at natives is that every shot should tell. It is the certainty of the thing that scares them. If they hear bullets singing about with only occasionally a man dropping they gain confidence, but a slow, steady fire with every shot telling

shakes their nerves, and makes them very careful of showing themselves."

Half an hour later Jack reported he could see figures moving in the bush on his side, and soon afterward a fire was opened on the hut from that direction.

"They have worked round the end of the clearing," Mr. Atherton said. "Now it is our turn to begin to fire. We have let them have their own way long enough, and there is plenty of light now, and I think we shall soon be able to put a stop to this game. Now, Wilfrid, do you with one of the Grimstones take up your place at the loopholes at that end of the house, and I with the others will take up mine on the right. Keep a sharp lookout, and do not throw away a shot if you can help it. As we have not answered their fire they have probably got careless, and are sure to expose themselves as they stand up to fire. Now, Bob," he went on, as he took his place at the loophole, "I will take the first who shows himself. I do not think you would miss, but I am sure that I shall not, and it is important not to make a mistake the first time."

Half a minute later a native showed his head and shoulders over a bush as he rose to fire. Before he could raise his gun to his shoulder he fell with a bullet through his head from Mr. Atherton's unerring rifle. That gentleman quietly reloaded.

"You had better take the next again, sir," Bob Grimstone said quietly. "I do not suppose I should miss, but I might do. I do not reckon on hitting a small mark more than eight out of twelve times."

It was nearly four minutes before another native showed himself.

"I think, sir, there is one standing behind that big tree twenty yards in the bush. I thought I saw something move behind it just now."

"I will watch it, Bob," Mr. Atherton said, raising his rifle to his shoulder and looking along it through the loophole.

Two minutes passed, and then a head and shoulder appeared from behind the tree. Instantaneously Mr. Atherton's rifle cracked, and the native fell forward, his gun going off as he did so.

"We need not stand here any longer," Mr. Atherton said quietly, "there will be no more shooting from that side for some time."

Mr. Atherton went to the other end of the house.

"How are you getting on, Wilfrid?"

"We have had three shots. I fired twice and Bill once. I think I missed once altogether, the other time the native went down. Bill wounded his man—hit him in the shoulder, I think. They haven't fired since."

"Then you can put down your guns for the present. Mrs. Renshaw has just told me that breakfast is ready."

Mrs. Renshaw and Marion had indeed gone quietly about the work of preparing breakfast for their defenders.

"So you are a noncombatant this morning, Miss Marion?" Mr. Atherton said as he took his place with the rest of the party, with the exception of the Grimstones, who were placed on the watch, at the table.

"Yes," the girl replied; "if I thought there were any danger of the natives fighting their way into the house, of course I should do my best to help to defend it; but I do not think that there is the least fear of such a thing, so I am quite content to leave it to you. It does not seem to me that a woman has any business to fight unless absolutely driven to do so in defense of her life. If the natives really do come on and get up close to the house I think that I ought to help to keep them out; but it is a dreadful thing to have to shoot any one—at least it seems so to me."

"It is not a pleasant thing when considered in cold blood; but when men go out of their way to take one's life, I do not feel the slightest compunction myself in taking theirs. These natives have no cause of complaint against us. They have assembled and attacked the settlement in a treacherous manner, and without the slightest warning of their intentions. Their intention is to slay man, woman and child without mercy, and I therefore regard them as human tigers, and no more deserving of pity. At the same time I can quite enter into your feelings, and think you are perfectly right not to take any active part in the affair unless we are pressed by the savages. Then, of course, you would be not only justified, but it would, I think, be your absolute duty to do your best to defend the place."

"Do you think that it is all over now, Mr. Atherton?" Mrs. Renshaw asked. "We regard you as our commanding officer, for you are the only one here who ever saw a shot fired in anger before our voyage out, and your experience is invaluable to us now. Indeed, both my husband and myself feel that it is to your suggestion that we should put up the strong shutters and doors that we owe the lives of our children; for had it not been for that, those men who came first might have taken the house when they found them alone in it."

"I cannot accept your thanks for that, Mrs. Renshaw. It may be if this goes on that the shutters will be found of the greatest use, and indeed they have probably stopped a good many balls from coming in and so saved some of our lives, but on the first occasion Wilfrid and your daughter owed their lives to their being prepared and armed, while the natives, relying upon surprising them, had left their guns in the wood. The shutters were not closed until after they made off, and had they

not been there those four natives could never have passed across the clearing and reached the house under the fire of two cool and steady marksmen.

"As to your first question, whether it is all over, it depends entirely upon whether the party who attacked us are the main force of the natives. If so, I do not think they will renew the attack at present. They have suffered terribly, and know now that it is almost certain death for any of them to show themselves within range of our guns. They have lost fourteen or fifteen men, and I do not think they numbered above forty at first. But if they are only a detached party, and a main body of the tribe is making an attack elsewhere, perhaps upon the settlers at Mitford's, a messenger will by this time have been dispatched to them, and we may all have a much more serious attack to encounter to-night or to-morrow morning.

"I have no idea what tribe these fellows belong to; but there are few of the tribes that cannot put five hundred men in the field, while some can put five times that number. So, you see, we are entirely in the dark. Of course things will depend a good deal as to how the main body, if there is a main body, has fared. If they have been, as I feel sure they will be if they venture to attack Mitford's place, roughly handled, the whole body may return home. The natives have proved themselves through the war admirable in defense; but they have by no means distinguished themselves in the attack, and have not so far as I remember, succeeded in a single instance in capturing a position stoutly held.

"It is one thing to fight behind strong palisades, defended by interior works skillfully laid out, and quite another to advance across the open to assault a defended position; and my belief is that, if they are beaten at

Mitford's as well as here, we shall hear no more of them at present. Mind, I do not say that after this I think that it would be safe to continue to live in an outlying station like this until matters have again settled down in this part of the island. No doubt, as soon as the news is known at Napier and Wellington a force will be sent here, or perhaps to Poverty Bay, which is only some twenty miles higher up the coast, and is, I think, from what I hear, better suited as the base of operations than this river would be.

"This force will no doubt make an expedition inland to punish the tribes connected with this affair, for it is of course most important to let the natives on this side of the island see that they cannot attack our settlements with impunity. After that is done it will no doubt be safe to recommence operations here; but at present I fear you will find it necessary for a time to abandon the place, and either take up your abode at the Mitford's, or go down to Napier or Wellington. This will, of course, involve the loss of the crops you have planted, and possibly of your house; but as you have saved all your animals, the loss will be comparatively small and easily repaired."

"Whether large or small," Mr. Renshaw said, "we cannot hesitate over it. It will, as you say, be out of the question to live here exposed at any instant to attack, and never knowing what the day or night may bring forth. The house has not cost above a hundred pounds, and we must put up with that loss. We are fortunately in a very much better position than most settlers in having a reserve to fall back upon, so there will be no hesitation on my part in taking this step. The furniture is worth more than the hut, but I suppose that must go too."

"Not necessarily, Mr. Renshaw. We cannot get away now; for although we can defend ourselves well enough here, we could not make our way down through the woods to Mitford's without great risks. They are accustomed to bush fighting, and as they are still five to one against us, it would be a very serious matter to try to fight our way down. I think that we have no choice but to remain where we are until we are either relieved or are perfectly certain that they have made off. In either case we should then have ample time to make our preparations for retiring, and could strip the house and send everything down in boats or bullock-carts, and might even get up the potatoes, and cut such of the crops as are ripe, or nearly ripe, and send them down also.

"The corps that has been got up among the settlers will be sure to join in the expedition for the punishment of these scoundrels, and indeed it is most probable that all able-bodied settlers will be called out. In any case I think I shall 'chip in,' as the Americans say. I shall have an opportunity of going into little explored tracts in the interior and adding to my collections; and to tell you the truth, I feel anxious to take a part in revenging the massacres that these treacherous natives have committed. Unless they get a sharp lesson the lives of the settlers in all the outlying districts in the colony will be unsafe."

Wilfrid glanced at Mr. Atherton and nodded, to intimate that he should be willing and ready to join in such an expedition; but he thought it better to say nothing at present. The two Allens, however, said at once that if obliged to quit their clearing they would join one of the irregular corps for the defense of the colony.

"We shall get pay and rations," James Allen said, "and that will keep us going until things get settled;

and I should certainly like to lend a hand in punishing these treacherous natives. It is horrible to think of their stealing upon defenseless people at night and murdering men, women, and children. It is as bad as the Sepoy mutiny. And now the troops have been almost all withdrawn, and the colony has been left to shift for itself, I think it is no more than the duty of all who have no special ties to aid in the defense against these fanatical Hau-Haus."

"Very well, then, James; we will march side by side, and when you see me give out you shall carry me."

"That would be worse than fighting the natives," James Allen replied with a laugh. "If I were you, Mr. Atherton, I should engage ten natives to accompany me with poles and a hammock."

"That is not a bad idea," Mr. Atherton said calmly, "and possibly I may adopt it; but in that case I shall have to go as a free lance, for I fear it would scarcely be conducive to military discipline to see one of an armed band carried along in the ranks."

None would have thought from the cheerful tone of the conversation that the party were beleaguered by a bloodthirsty enemy. But Mr. Atherton purposely gave a lively tone to the conversation to keep up their spirits. He felt, as he expressed himself, perfectly confident that they could beat off any attack in the daytime; but he knew that if their assailants were largely reinforced, and the place attacked by night, the position would be a very serious one. He even was convinced that the assailants would not be able to force their way in, but they would assuredly try to fire the house; and although the solid logs would be difficult to ignite, the matchboard covering and the roof would both readily catch fire. However, his hope lay in preventing the natives from firing

it, as it would be difficult in the extreme to bring up burning branches under the fire of the defenders.

"It is a pity now, Wilfrid," he said to the lad after breakfast was over, and they had taken up their place together at one of the windows, "that we did not dissuade your father from putting that boarding to the logs. You did not intend to have it at first, and now it adds a good deal to our danger. The only thing I am afraid of is fire, though I own I do not think that there is much chance of any of them getting up with a lighted brand under the fire of our rifles. If the natives were not in the bush at the present moment, I should say that the best thing by far to do would be for all hands to set to work to tear off the match-boarding, and to get down the whole of the covering of the roof; they could not well hurt us then."

"Shall we do it at once, Mr. Atherton?"

"They would shoot us down at their leisure, Wilfrid. No, that is not to be thought of. We must run the risk of fire now; and I feel, as I said, pretty confident that we are too good shots to let men with fire get up to the walls. I wish we could send down word to Mitford's that we are besieged here. Of course, if he is attacked himself he could not help us; but if he is not, I know he would come out at once with a strong party to our relief. I wonder whether that native boy of yours would try to carry a message. None of us would have a chance of getting through, but these fellows can crawl like snakes, and by working up through the crops to the upper end of the glade he might gain the bush unobserved."

"I will ask him anyhow," Wilfrid said.

Jack on being promised a new suit of clothes and a present in money if he would carry a note through to Mr. Mitford, at once undertook the mission. Mr. Ren-

shaw on being told what was arranged, wrote a note stating their position, and Jack, divesting himself of the greater portion of his clothes, crept out through the door at the back of the house, and lying down at once began to crawl through the potato patch toward the upper end of the clearing. From the loopholes of the windows the defenders watched his progress. Although aware of his approximate position they were soon unable to trace his progress.

"He will do," Mr. Atherton said; "if we, knowing the line he is taking, can see nothing move, you may be sure that those fellows in the bush will not be able to make him out. Well, we shall have assistance in four or five hours if Mitford's hands are free."

A quarter of an hour passed and all was still quiet.

"He is in the bush by this time," Mr. Atherton said; "now we can take matters easy."

An occasional shot was fired from the bush, and shouts raised, which Mr. Renshaw interpreted to be threats of death and extermination.

"They say that all the white men are to be driven into the sea—not one left alive on the island."

"Well, we shall see about that," Mr. Atherton said; "they are not getting on very fast at present."

As time went on it was only the occasional crack of a gun, accompanied by the thud of a bullet against the logs, that told that the natives were still present. They now never raised themselves to fire, but kept well back in the bush, shifting their position after each shot. Time passed somewhat slowly inside, until about four o'clock in the afternoon the sharp crack of a rifle was heard.

"There is Mitford!" Mr. Atherton exclaimed; "that is not a Maori gun. Man the loopholes again! We must prevent any of the fellows on the other side crossing to

the assistance of their friends, and give it to the others hot if they are driven out of the shelter of the bush."

The rifle-shot was speedily followed by others, and then came the deeper report of the Maori muskets. English shouts were heard, mingled with the yells of the natives. The fight was evidently sharp, for Jack had led the relieving party down upon the rear of the natives engaged in attacking the house from the left. The latter began to fall back, and the defenders of the house presently caught sight of their figures as they flitted from tree to tree.

"We must be careful," Mr. Atherton said, "for every bullet that misses might strike our friends. I think that you had all better reserve your fire till they make a break across the open. You can see by the direction they are firing and the sound of the rifles Mitford is closing in on both their flanks so as to drive them out of the bush. I can trust myself not to miss, and will pick them off when I see any of them sheltering on this side of the trees. There is a fellow there just going to fire." His rifle cracked, and the native fell among the bushes.

This completed the scare of the natives, who had already been much disconcerted at the unexpected attack made upon them. The leader of the party shouted an order, and the whole of them made a sudden rush through the bush down toward the river. Three or four fell beneath the rifles of the whites on that side of them, but the rest burst through and continued their course down to the river, and, plunging in, swam to the other side without once giving the defenders of the house the chance of a shot at them.

"Now we can sally out," Mr. Renshaw said.

The door was opened, and they hurried out just as a party of whites issued from the wood and ran toward the house.

"Thanks for your speedy aid, Mitford!" Mr. Renshaw exclaimed as he wrung the hand of the settler.

"You are heartily welcome, my dear sir A party was just setting off to see how you had fared when your native boy arrived with your note, and it was a great relief to us to know that you had repulsed their attack with such heavy loss to them; I am afraid that several others have not fared so well. Two or three native servants have come in this morning with news of massacres of whole families, they themselves having managed to make their escape in the confusion; and I am afraid that we shall hear of other similar cases. Your gallant defense of your station has been of most important service to us all. There is no doubt that it saved us from an attack at our place. There were a good many natives in the bush round us this morning yelling and shouting, but they did not venture on an attack; and I have no doubt they were waiting for the arrival of the party told off to attack your place on their way. Do you think that there are any of them still in the bush on the other side?"

"I should hardly think so," Mr. Atherton replied. "There must have been fully half of them in the party you attacked, and the others are hardly likely to have waited after they saw you had defeated their friends; but I think that it would be as well for a party of us to ascertain, for if they are still lurking there some of us may be shot down as we move about outside the house. We are quite strong enough now to venture upon such a step."

"I think so, too," Mr. Mitford agreed. "There are ten men beside myself and your party. We had better leave four here, the rest of us will make a dash down to the edge of the bush and then skirmish through it."

Mr. Renshaw, the two Grimstones, and one of the settlers were appointed to remain behind to guard the house, and the rest of the party then dashed at full speed across the glade to the edge of the bush. Not a shot was fired as they did so, and having once gained the shelter they advanced through the trees. After pushing forward for half a mile they came to the conclusion that the Maoris had retreated. Many signs were seen of their presence. There were marks of blood here and there, and the bushes were broken down where they had carried off those who had fallen killed or wounded in the bush; the bodies of those who had fallen in the open still remained there.

Upon the return of the party Mr. Mitford was informed of the determination that had been arrived at. This met with his cordial approval.

"I think, Mrs. Renshaw," he said, "that the best plan will be for you and your husband and daughter to return at once with me. I will leave a couple of my men here with your garrison, and in the morning will come out with a strong party and three or four bullock drays to fetch in all your portable property. They can make another trip for your potatoes and such of your crops as can be got in. After the sharp lesson the natives have had here they are not likely to venture in this neighborhood again for some time; and, indeed, now that they find that the whole settlement it aroused and on its guard I doubt whether we shall hear anything more of them at present, and possibly you may, when matters settle down again, find your house just as it is left."

Mr. and Mrs. Renshaw agreed to the plan proposed, and in a quarter of an hour the party started, leaving The Glade under the protection of the garrison of eight men. The night passed off quietly, and at daybreak all

set to work to get up the potatoes and to cut down the crops that were sufficiently ripe. At nine o'clock the wagons arrived, and the furniture and stores were loaded up. By twelve o'clock next day the work in the fields was completed and the wagons again loaded. The house was then locked up and the whole party proceeded to the settlement. They found on their arrival that a strong stockade had been erected near Mr. Mitford's house, and that rough tents and huts had been got up there for the use of the settlers; the whole of the animals belonging to the various farmers on the river had been driven into the stockaded inclosure behind the house.

Here it was decided that all the settlers should remain until help arrived from Wellington or Napier, but in the meantime twenty-five of the younger men were enrolled as a volunteer corps; a Mr. Purcell, who had served for some years as an officer in the army, being unanimously elected to command. There still remained enough men capable of bearing arms to defend the stockade in case of attack during the absence of the corps. Wilfrid and the two Allens were among those who enrolled themselves. Mr. Atherton said that he fully intended to accompany them if possible upon any expedition they might make, but that he should not become a member of the corps.

"You may have long marches," he said, "through the bush, or may, when the reinforcements arrive, be called upon to make an expedition into the hill country to punish the natives. I could not possibly keep up with you during a heavy day's marching, so I shall, like Hal of the Wynd, fight for my own sword. I dare say I shall be there or thereabout when there is any work to be done, but I must get there in my own way and in my own time. I shall have my own commissariat train. I have had my share of living on next to nothing, and have

become somewhat of an epicure, and and I know that the sort of rations you are likely to get on a march though a rough country would not suit my constitution. But, as I said before, I hope if there is any fighting done to be somewhere in the neighborhood."

CHAPTER IV.

FRESH TROUBLES.

THREE days later a small steamer arrived from Napier, bringing a reply to the urgent request that had been sent for the dispatch of a body of constabulary for the protection of the settlers. Sir Donald McLean, the superintendent of the province, sent word that this was impossible at present, as the alarming news had just been received that the notorious chief Te Kooti, who had been captured and imprisoned at Chatham Island, had effected his escape with the whole of the natives confined in the island, had captured a schooner, and had, it was reported, landed near Poverty Bay.

"It is probable," Sir Donald wrote, "that it is the news of his landing which has excited one of the tribes of the neighborhood to make an attack upon you. A strong expedition will be fitted out, and we shall doubtless have to supply a contingent. I can only advise you to organize yourselves into a militia, and to stand for the present on the defensive. As soon as operations begin from Poverty Bay you will be relieved from all further danger, as the attention of the hostile tribes will be fully occupied in that direction."

Hitherto the province of Hawke Bay had been comparatively free from the troubles that had so long disturbed Auckland, Taranaki, and the northern portion of Wellington. Only one rising had taken place, and this had been so promptly crushed that the tribes had since re-

mained perfectly quiet. In October, 1866, a party of a hundred fighting men had suddenly appeared near the Meanee village. Their principal chief had hitherto borne a very high character, and had been employed by the government to improve the mail road between Napier and Taupo. Colonel Witmore, who was in command of the colonial forces—for the regular troops had now been almost entirely withdrawn from the island—had just returned from punishing some natives who had committed massacres higher up on the coast, and was, fortunately, at Napier; he at once dispatched a company of colonists under Major Fraser, with thirty or forty friendly natives, to hold the natives in check.

Just as they had been sent off the news came that another and more numerous body of Hau-Haus were advancing by way of Petane to attack Napier. Major Fraser and his company were sent off to check these, while Colonel Whitmore, with one hundred and eighty of the colonial militia, marched against the smaller force, and McLean, with two hundred friendly natives, established himself in the rear of the village they occupied. An officer was sent in to summon them to surrender, and as no answer could be obtained from them the colonists advanced. The enemy fought with resolution, but the colonists opened a cross-fire upon them, and after fighting for some time the natives were driven out of their cover. Finding no mode of retreat open to them they laid down their arms, some who endeavored to escape being cut off and also captured. The native loss was twenty-three killed and twenty eight wounded—many of them mortally; forty-four taken prisoners. Only two or three of the whole party escaped. Upon the same day Major Fraser's little force attacked the other party of Hau-Haus, killed their chief with twelve of his followers, and put the rest to flight.

From that time peace had been unbroken in Hawke Bay; but there had been several outbreaks at Poverty Bay, which lay just north of the province, and massacres at Opotaki and other places further to the north, and almost continuous fighting in the northern districts of Wellington. The news of Te Kooti's escape and of his landing at Poverty Bay naturally caused considerable alarm among the settlers, but hopes were entertained that the whites at Poverty Bay, aided by the friendly natives, would be able to recapture Te Kooti and his followers before they could do any harm.

The next day a small vessel came down from Poverty Bay with a message from Major Biggs, who commanded at that settlement, to ask for assistance if it could be spared him. A consultation was held and it was agreed that the best plan of defending their own settlement was to aid in the recapture of Te Kooti, and that the little force of twenty men should at once go up to aid the settlers under Major Biggs. Accordingly they embarked without delay, Mr. Atherton making a separate bargain with the captain of the craft for his passage, and the next morning they arrived in Poverty Bay.

Major Biggs had, as soon as the news reached him, raised a force of a hundred Europeans and natives. He found Te Kooti's party, a hundred and ninety strong, holding a very strong position near the sea, and sent a chief to them to say that if they would lay down their arms he would try and smooth matters over with government. A defiant answer was returned, and Major Biggs gave orders to commence the attack. But the natives, who formed the bulk of his force, refused to move, saying that the Hau-Haus were too numerous and too strongly posted. Under these circumstances an attack was impossible, for had the little body of whites been

defeated the whole settlement would have been open to ravage and destruction.

During the night Te Kooti and his men started for the interior, carrying with them all the stores and provisions they had taken from the schooner. When it was found they had escaped Major Biggs ordered Mr. Skipwith to follow with some friendly natives, pressing on their rear until he ascertained their line of retreat, when he was to cut across country and join the main body who were to march to Paparatu, a point which Te Kooti would in all probability pass in his retreat. The arrival of the coaster with the little band from the Mohaka River was hailed with joy by the Poverty Bay settlers. They arrived just in time to join Major Biggs and raised his force to fifty white men, who, with thirty Maoris, started for Paparatu and arrived there on the following morning. The Europeans were commanded by Captains Westrupp and Wilson. In the afternoon Mr. Atherton arrived with a party of four natives whom he had hired to carry his store of provisions, ammunition and baggage.

"So I am in plenty of time," he said when he came up. "I could not bring myself to undertake a night march, but as those fellows have got to lug all the stores they have captured over the mountains I felt pretty sure that I should be in time."

"I am glad you are in time, Mr. Atherton," Wilfrid said. "The assistance of your rifle is not to be despised. The sooner the natives come now the better, for we have only brought four days' provisions in our haversacks. I hear that a reserve force is to come up in two days with rations and ammunition; but one can never calculate upon these natives."

The camp was pitched in a hollow to avoid the observation of the enemy, but it was proposed to fight at a

point a mile distant, in a position commanding the spur of the hill, up which the natives must advance after crossing a ford on the Arai river. Four days passed and there was no news of the convoy with the provisions, and the supply in camp was almost exhausted. That evening Major Biggs started to bring up the supplies with all speed, as otherwise starvation would compel the force to retreat. The same day Mr. Skipwith had arrived with news that Te Kooti was undoubtedly marching on Paparatu, but was making slow progress, owing to the heavy loads his men were carrying.

The fifth day passed slowly. The men being altogether without food Mr. Atherton divided his small stock of provisions and wine among them, and then taking his rifle went out among the hills, accompanied by two of his natives. Late in the evening he returned, the natives bearing an old boar which he had shot. This was a great piece of luck, for the island contained no wild animals fit for eating, and the boar had probably escaped from some settler's farm or native clearing when young and taken to the woods. It was at once cut up and divided among the hungry men. The next day Mr. Skipwith, with two natives, went out to reconnoiter, and soon returned at full speed, saying that the natives were crossing the river. Captain Wilson, with twenty men, took possession of a hill on the right flank—an almost impregnable position, while Captain Westrupp, with the main body, marched to support the picket which had been placed on the position which it had been arranged they should occupy; but before they could arrive there Te Kooti, with overwhelming numbers, had driven the picket from the ground and occupied the hill.

"This is going to be an awkward business, Wilfrid," Mr. Atherton said. "We have only thirty rounds of

ammunition a man, and we have had nothing to eat for the last forty-eight hours but a mouthful of meat. We have suffered the natives to take the position we fixed on. We are outnumbered three to one, and there are not ten men in the force who have had any experience in fighting. If the worst comes to the worst, Wilfrid, do you and the Allens take to the bush. Mind, it is no use trying to run from the natives. If the men were all like our party the other day we could keep these fellows at bay for any time; but they are most of them young hands. They will blaze away their ammunition, and may be seized with a panic. I shall keep close to you, and if things do go badly we will keep together and sell our lives dearly."

"We must retake that place if possible, lads," Captain Westrupp said at that moment. "Spread out in skirmishing order and take advantage of any cover you can find, but let there be no stopping or lagging behind. We must all get up there together and carry it with a rush."

There was no time lost. The men spread out, and with a cheer started up the hill. They were received with a storm of bullets; but the natives from their eminence fired high, and without suffering loss they reached a small ridge near the summit, about twelve yards from the enemy, and separated from them by a narrow gully. Here they threw themselves down, and their fire at once caused the Hau-Haus to throw themselves down among the bushes on their side of the gully. The position of the colonists was a fairly strong one. On their right flank the ground was open, with a few scattered bushes here and there, but the left was covered by a steep ravine, which fell away sharply. The Hau-Haus kept up a heavy fire, to which the colonists replied but seldom,

their officer continually impressing upon them the necessity for husbanding their ammunition. Mr. Atherton had arrived breathless in the rear of the party, and had thrown himself down by Wilfrid's side, the two Allens lying next in order. For some minutes Mr. Atherton did not speak, but lay panting heavily.

"This is a nice preparation for shooting," he said presently. "However, I suppose my hand will steady itself after a bit I have seen a fellow's head show under that bush there twice, and each time his bullet came just over our heads. I will have a talk with him as soon as I get my wind back again. This is not a bad position after all, providing they don't work round to our right."

Ten minutes later Wilfrid, who had his eyes fixed on a bush from which four or five shots had been fired, waiting for another puff of smoke to indicate the exact position in which the man was lying, heard the sharp report of Mr. Atherton's rifle.

"You have got him, I suppose?"

"Of course, lad; there is one less of the yelling rascals to deal with. I wish we could see Biggs and his people coming along the road behind. If we could get a square meal all round and a good supply of ammunition I think we should be able to turn the tables on these fellows. The men are all fighting very steadily, and are husbanding their ammunition better than I expected to see them do."

The fight went on for four hours. Then a number of the Hau-Haus leaped to their feet and made a rush toward the settlers, but the volley they received proved too much for them. Several fell, and the rest bolted back into shelter. Again and again this was tried, but each time without success. At three in the afternoon some men were seen coming along the road behind toward the deserted

camp. Captain Westrupp at once wrote a note and sent it down by one of the men, but to the disappointment of the settlers he soon returned with the news that the new arrivals consisted of only nine Maoris carrying rations. They had opened the rum bottles on their way, and most of them were excessively drunk. Two of them who were sufficiently sober came up to help in the defense, but one was shot dead almost immediately, one of the settlers being killed and many wounded more or less severely.

Just as evening was coming on the force was startled by hearing a Hau-Hau bugle in their rear, and presently made out a party of the enemy moving toward the camp through the broken ground on the left rear. It was now evident that either the enemy must be driven off the hill in front or the party must retire to a position on the hill behind the camp. Captain Westrupp determined to try the former alternative first. Calling upon the men to follow him, he dashed across the gully and up on to the crest held by the Maoris. The men followed him gallantly; but the fire from the Maoris hidden among the bushes was so heavy that they were forced to fall back again, seven more of their number being wounded. They now retired in good order down to the camp and up the hill behind it, and were here joined by Captain Wilson with his twenty men.

It was now determined to throw up a sort of intrenchment and hold this position until help came; but the settlers, who had hitherto fought well, were dispirited by their want of success, and by the non-arrival of the reinforcement, and were weak with their long fast. As soon as it became dark they began to steal off and to make their way back toward their homes, and in an hour half the force had retreated. The officers held a council. It was evident the position could not long be held, and that

want of food and ammunition would compel a retreat in the morning. It was therefore decided to fall back under cover of the darkness.

The chief of the friendly natives, who had behaved admirably through the fight, offered to guide the party across the country. The officers were obliged to leave their horses, and the party of forty half-starved men, of whom a fourth were wounded—two so severely that it was necessary to carry them—set out. It was a terrible march for the exhausted men, up the bed of a mountain creek, often waist-deep in water, and over steep fern-covered hills, until, just as day was breaking, they reached an out-station. Here they managed to get two sheep, and just as they had cooked and eaten these Colonel Whitmore, the commander of the colonial forces, arrived with thirty volunteers from Napier, who had reached the bay on the previous day.

He at once paraded the men, thanked them for their behavior on the previous day, and warned them to be ready to start in pursuit of the enemy at once. One of the settlers, acting as spokesman for the rest, stepped forward, pointed out that they had been fighting without intermission for twenty-four hours, that they had been for the last forty-eight hours almost without food, and that it was impossible for them to set out on a fresh march until they had taken some rest. Colonel Whitmore was a hot-tempered man, and expressed himself so strongly that he caused deep offense among the settlers.

They remained firm in their determination not to move until the following day, and the forward movement was therefore necessarily abandoned. On the day previous to the fight Lieutenant Gascoigne had been dispatched by Major Biggs to Te Wairoa with dispatches for Mr. Deighton, who commanded at that station, warning him

to muster all the force at his disposal, and prepare to intercept Te Kooti at the Waihau Lakes in case he should fight his way through Captain Westrupp's force. Orders were sent to the friendly Mahia tribe to muster, and a hundred men at once assembled; but as they had only four rounds of ammunition apiece, nothing could be done until three casks of ammunition were obtained from some of the Wairoa chiefs.

Two days were lost in consequence, and this gave time to Te Kooti; they then started—eighteen European volunteers and eighty natives; a larger body of natives preparing to follow as soon as possible. After being met by messengers with several contradictory orders, they arrived at Waihau, and just before dark Te Kooti was seen crossing the hills toward them with his whole force. Captain Richardson determined to fight them in the position he occupied, but the native chief, with sixty of his followers, at once bolted. Captain Richardson was therefore obliged with the remainder to fall back, and, unfortunately, in the retreat one of the natives fell; his gun went off and, bursting, injured his hand. This was considered by the natives a most unfortunate omen, and dissipated what little courage remained in the Wairoa tribe.

At eleven o'clock next morning the enemy advanced, and the action began; but the Wairoa chief, with fifty of his men, again bolted at the first shot. Captain Richardson with the remainder held the position until four in the afternoon, when the ammunition being almost exhausted, he retired quietly. The force fell back to Wairoa, where it was reorganized and increased to two hundred men. In the meantime Colonel Whitmore had been toiling on over a terrible country in Te Kooti's rear, having with him in all about two hundred men, as

he had been joined by Major Fraser with fifty of the No. 1 Division Armed Constabulary.

But when they arrived at the boundary of the Poverty Bay district the settlers belonging to it, who had not recovered from their indignation at Colonel Whitmore's unfortunate remarks, refused to go further, saying that the militia regulations only obliged them to defend their own district. Colonel Whitmore, therefore, with a hundred and thirty men of whom but a handful were whites, marched on to attack two hundred and twenty Hau-Haus posted in a very strong position in the gorge of a river. Twelve of the little party from the Mohaka river still remained with the column, one had been killed, four wounded, while five had remained behind completely knocked up by the fatigues they had encountered.

Mr. Atherton had not gone on with them after the arrival of Colonel Whitmore. "It is of no use my dear lad," he said to Wilfrid. "I know Colonel Whitmore well by reputation, and the way in which he blew us up this morning because, exhausted as we were, we were physically unable to set out for a fresh march, confirms what I have heard of him. He is a most gallant officer, and is capable of undergoing the greatest fatigue and hardships, and is of opinion that everyone else is as tireless and energetic as he is. He will drive you along over mountain, through rivers, with food or without food, until you come up to Te Kooti, and then he will fight, regardless of odds or position, or anything else. It isn't the fighting I object to; but I never could keep up with the column on such a march. It would be a physical impossibility, and I am not going to attempt it. I shall take a week to recover from my fatigues of last night, and shall go down and stay quietly at the settlement. If Te Kooti takes it into his head to come down

there, I shall have great pleasure in doing my best toward putting a stop to his rampaging over the country. If he does not come down I shall, as they say, await developments, and shall find plenty to do in the way of botanizing."

Mr. Atherton had not exaggerated the fatigues and hardships that the force would be called upon to undergo, and they were worn out and exhausted when at last they came upon the track of the Hau-Haus. When they were resting for a short halt, Captain Carr, late R.A., who was with the force as a volunteer, reconnoitered a short distance ahead and found the enemy's fire still burning. The news infused fresh life into the tired and hungry men, and they again went forward. The track led up the bed of a river which ran between low, steep cliffs impossible to climb, and the men had to advance in single file. After marching for some distance they reached a bend in the river where a narrow track ran through a break in the cliff and up the spur of a hill. The advanced guard, consisting of six men, led by Captain Carr, were within fifty yards of this point, when a heavy fire was opened upon them. Just where they were the river bank was sufficiently low to enable them to climb it and take cover in the thick scrub above, whence they replied vigorously to the Hau-Haus, who were within a few yards of them. In the meantime the enemy had opened fire from the base of the hill at the river bend upon the main body, who, standing in single file in the river, where unable to reply or to scale the steep bank and take covering in the scrub. Colonel Whitmore and Captain Tuke tried to lead the men up to charge, but this could only be done in single file, and the fire of the enemy was so hot that those who attempted this were killed or wounded, Captain Tuke being severely hurt.

The rest found what shelter they could among the bowlders in the river bed, and remained here until the advanced guard fell back, hard pressed by the enemy, and reported the death of Captain Carr and Mr. Canning, another volunteer.

The natives now pressed through the scrub above the cliffs to cut off the retreat. The friendly natives, who were well behind, were ordered to scale the cliff then, and hold the enemy in check. One of them was wounded, and the rest hastily retreated down the river; the constabulary and settlers, altogether about fifty strong, fell back to an island about half a mile to the rear, and here calmly awaited the attack of the enemy. These, however, drew off without disturbing them, disheartened by the fact that Te Kooti had received a wound in the foot, and the troops then retired. Only a few of the strongest men reached the camp that night; the rest, knocked up by want of food and fatigue, lay down in the pouring rain and did not get in until the following morning.

The result of this fight was most unfortunate. Even Colonel Whitmore saw that, with the force at his disposal, nothing could be done against Te Kooti, who was daily becoming more powerful, and was being joined by the tribes in the vicinity He believed that Te Kooti would carry out his expressed intention of marching north to Waikato, and after collecting there all the tribes of the island, march against Auckland. Thinking, therefore, that Poverty Bay was not likely to be disturbed, he left the settlement and went round by sea to Auckland to confer with government as to the steps to be taken to raise a force capable of coping with what appeared to be the greatest danger that had as yet threatened the island. Te Kooti did not, however, move north, but remained in

his camp near the scene of the fight from the 8th of August to the 28th of October, sending messages all over the island with the news of the defeat he had inflicted upon the whites, and proclaiming himself the savior of the Maori people.

From the position he occupied, about equidistant from the settlements at Wairoa and Poverty Bay, he was able to attack either by a sudden march of two or three days, and yet there was no great uneasiness among the settlers. The force that had operated against Te Kooti had been disbanded, the Napier volunteers had returned, the constabulary withdrawn, and the party of settlers from the Mohaka river had returned home. Wilfrid Renshaw had not gone with them. He had been shot through the leg in the fight in the river and had been carried down to the settlement. Here Mr. Atherton, who was lodging in one of the settler's houses, had taken charge of him and nursed him assiduously.

Unfortunately the effect of the wound was aggravated by the exhaustion caused by fatigue and insufficient food, and for weeks the lad lay in a state of prostration, wasted by a low fever which at one time seemed as if it would carry him off. It was not until the middle of October that matters took a turn, and he began slowly to mend. For the last three weeks his mother had been by his bedside. For some time Mr. Atherton in his letters had made light of the wound, but when the lad's condition became very serious he had written to Mrs. Renshaw saying that he thought she had better come herself to help in the nursing, as Wilfrid was now suffering from a sharp attack of fever brought on by his hardships.

Mrs. Renshaw, on her arrival, was dismayed at the state in which she found her son. She agreed, however, that it was best not to alarm them in her letters home.

The events on the attack of the settlement had much shaken Mr. Renshaw, and he was, when she left him, in a nervous and excited state. She saw that Wilfrid would need every moment of her time, and that were her husband to come it would probably do him harm and seriously interfere with her own usefulness. He was, when she left, on the point of returning to the farm with Marion, as there had been no further renewal of troubles in the settlement.

It had been arranged that the two Allens should take up their residence at The Glade, and that four men belonging to a small force that had been raised among the friendly natives should also be stationed there. This would, it was thought, render it quite safe against a sudden attack. Mr. Renshaw was looking eagerly forward to being at home again, and his wife thought that the necessity of superintending the operations at the farm would soothe his nerves and restore him to health. She, therefore, in her letters made the best of things, although admitting that Wilfrid was prostrated by a sort of low fever, and needed care and nursing.

At the end of another fortnight Wilfrid was enabled to sit up and take an interest in what was going on around him. The house was the property of a settler named Sampson, and had been erected by a predecessor of the farmer; it was a good deal larger than he required, though its capacity was now taxed to the utmost by the addition of three lodgers to his family.

"How are things going on, Mr. Atherton?" Wilfrid asked one day when his mother was not present.

"People here seem to think that they are going on very well, Wilfrid."

"But you do not think so, Mr. Atherton?" the lad asked, struck by the dry tone in which the answer was given.

"No, Wilfrid, I cannot say I do. It seems to me that the people here are living in a fool's paradise; and as for Major Biggs I regard him as an obstinate fool."

"How is that?" Wilfrid asked, amused at his friend's vehemence.

"Well, Wilfrid, as far as I can see there is nothing in the world to prevent Te Kooti coming down and cutting all our throats whenever he pleases."

"You don't say so, Mr. Atherton!"

"I do, indeed; it is known that he has sent messages down to the natives here to remain apparently loyal, get what arms they can from the whites, and prepare to join him. I will say for Biggs that he has repeatedly represented the unprotected position of the bay to government, and has obtained permission to place an officer and nine men on pay as scouts to watch the roads leading to the settlements. Gascoigne is in charge of them. There are two roads by which the natives can come; the one a short one, and this is being watched, the other a much longer and more difficult one, and this is entirely open to them if they choose to use it.

"The fact is, Biggs relies on the fact that Colonel Lambert is at Wairoa, and is collecting a force of six hundred men there to attack Te Kooti, and he believes that he shall get information from him and from some spies he has in the neighborhood of Te Kooti's camp long before any movement is actually made. Of course he may do so, but I consider it is a very risky thing to trust the safety of the whole settlement to chance. He ought to station four mounted men on both tracks as near as he dare to Te Kooti's camp. In that case we should be sure to get news in plenty of time to put all the able-bodied men under arms before the enemy could reach the settlement."

"Have they got a stockade built?"

"No, it was proposed at a meeting of some of the settlers that this should be done, but Biggs assured them it was altogeth r unnecessary. I do not know how it is Wilfrid, but take us altogether we Englishmen have fully a fair share of common sense. I have observed over and over again that in the majority of cases when an Englishman reaches a certain rank in official life, he seems to become an obstinate blockhead. I have often wondered over it, but cannot account for it. Anyhow the state of affairs here is an excellent example of this. I suppose in the whole settlement there is not, with the exception of the man in authority, a single person who does not perceive that the situation is a dangerous one, and that no possible precaution should be omitted; and yet the man who is responsible for the safety of all throws cold water on every proposal, and snubs those who are willing to give up time and labor in order to insure the safety of the place.

"I suppose he considers that the tone he adopts shows him to be a man superior to those around him, possessing alike far greater knowledge of the situation, and a total freedom from the cowardly fears of his neighbors. Well, well, I hope that events will justify his course, but I own that I sleep with my rifle and revolvers loaded and ready to hand. Mind, I do not say that the chances may not be ten to one against Te Kooti's making a raid down here; but I say if they were a hundred to one it would be the height of folly not to take every possible precaution to insure the safety of all here."

"Don't you think, Mr. Atherton, that it would be better for mother to go home? I am getting all right now, and can get on very well without her."

"I am sure your mother would not leave you at pres-

ent, Wilfrid, and I don't think you will be fit to be moved for another fortnight yet. Te Kooti has done nothing for two months, and may not move for as much more. You mother knows nothing of what I have told you, and I should not make her anxious or uncomfortable by giving her even a hint that I considered there is danger in the air."

CHAPTER XV.

THE MASSACRE AT POVERTY BAY.

ANOTHER week passed and Wilfrid was able to walk about the house and garden. A ship was going down in three days, and Mr. Atherton had arranged with the captain to put into the Mohaka river and land them there. No change had taken place in the situation. There had been a meeting of the settlers and friendly natives. The latter had offered to erect the stockades for a small fort if the settlers would do the earthworks. This they had agreed to, but the project was abandoned, as Major Biggs again declared it to be wholly unnecessary. Some of the settlers, dissatisfied with the result, formed themselves into a vigilance committee to watch the ford of the Waipaoa river.

This was done for several nights, but Major Biggs again interfered, and told them he considered the act to be absurd. The vigilance committee, therefore, ceased to act. A few nights later Te Kooti's people crossed at this very ford. Late in the evening of the 4th of November Mr. Atherton was about to go up to bed when he heard a growl from a dog chained up outside. He listened, and made out the voices of men talking in low tones. The lower windows had shutters, and these Mr. Atherton had with some difficulty persuaded Mr. Sampson, who was himself incredulous as to the possibility of attack, to have fastened up of a night. Mr. Atherton ran upstairs, knocked at the doors of Wilfrid's and the

settler's rooms, and told them to get up instantly, as something was wrong. Then he threw up his window.

"Who is there?" he asked.

"Open the door," a native replied, "we have a message for you."

"You can give me the message here. I shall not come down until I know who you are."

"The message is that you are to open the door and come out. Te Kooti wants you."

Mr. Atherton could just make out the figure of the speaker in the darkness.

"That is my answer," he said as he fired.

A fierce yell from twenty throats rose in the air, and there was a rush toward the door, while two or three shots were fired at the window. Mr. Atherton had, however, stepped back the instant he had discharged his rifle, and now, leaning out, discharged the chambers of his revolver in quick succession among the navvies gathered round the door. Shrieks and yells arose from them, and they bounded away into the darkness, and again several musket shots were fired at the window. By this time the settler and Wilfrid had both joined Mr. Atherton, having leaped from their beds, seized their arms, and ran out when the first shot was fired.

"It is Te Kooti's men," Mr. Atherton said. "They have come at last. I expect there will be a few minutes before they attack again. You had better throw on some clothes at once and tell the ladies to dress instantly. We may have to leave the house and try to escape across country."

Wilfrid and the settler gave the messages, and then returned.

"How many of them do you think there are?" Wilfrid asked.

"About twenty of them I should say, and we could rely upon beating them off; but no doubt there are parties told off to the attack of all the outlying settlers, and when the others have done their work they may gather here."

"Where are they now?" Wilfrid asked as he gazed into the darkness.

"I fancy they are behind that shed over there. They are no doubt arranging their plan of attack. I expect they will try fire. There! do you see? That is the flash of a match."

A minute later a light was seen to rise behind the shed, and there was a sound of breaking wood. The light grew brighter and brighter.

"They will be coming soon," Mr. Atherton said. "Do not throw away a shot. The shingles on this roof are as dry as tinder, and if a burning brand falls on them the place will be in a blaze in five minutes. Now!" As he spoke a number of natives, each carrying a flaming brand, appeared from behind the woodshed. Three rifles cracked out, and as many natives fell. The farmer began to reload his rifle, while Mr. Atherton and Wilfrid handed theirs to Mrs. Renshaw, who at that moment joined them, and opened fire with their revolvers. Only two of Wilfrid's shots told, but Mr. Atherton's aim was as steady as when firing at a mark. Two of the natives fell, and four others, throwing down their brands, ran back wounded to the shelter of the woodshed. Their companions after a moment's hesitation, followed their example. There were now but six unwounded men out of the twenty who attacked the house.

"There is one of them off for assistance!" Wilfrid exclaimed as he caught sight of a figure running at full speed from the shed. In another moment he was lost in the darkness.

"Now is the time for us to make our escape," Mr. Atherton said, turning from the window. "We have succeeded so far, but there may be three times as many next time, and we must be off. We will get out by a window at the back of the house and try and make our way across country to the Mahia tribe. We shall be safe there."

"But Wilfrid cannot walk a hundred yards," Mrs. Renshaw said.

"Then we must carry him," Mr. Atherton replied cheerfully. "He is no great weight, and we can make a litter when we get far enough away. Take a loaf of bread, Mrs. Sampson, a bottle or two of water, and a flask of spirits. You will find one full on my table. Please hurry up, for there is not a moment to lose. I will stay here to the last moment and fire an occasional shot at the shed to let them know that we are still here."

As the course Mr. Atherton advised was evidently the best, the others followed his instructions without discussion, and three minutes later stepped out from the back window into the garden. Mr. Atherton had been told that they were ready, and after firing a last shot from the window and reloading his rifle joined them. Mrs. Sampson had a small basket on one arm, and her child, who was ten years old, grasping her hand. Mrs. Renshaw had taken charge of Wilfrid's rifle, and had offered him her arm, but the excitement had given him his strength for the moment, and he declared himself perfectly capable of walking without assistance.

"Go on as quietly as you can," Mr. Atherton said. "I will keep a bit behind first. They may possibly have put somebody on the watch on this side of the house, although I do not expect they have. They have been taken too much by surprise themselves."

The little party went on quietly and noiselessly about three hundred yards, and then Mr. Atherton joined them. Wilfrid was breathing heavily and leaning against a tree.

"Now jump up upon my back, Wilfrid," Mr. Atherton said; "your weight will not make much difference to me one way or the other. That is right; lend him a hand, Sampson, and get him on to my shoulders. It will be easier for both of us, for I have got no hips for his knees to catch hold of. That is right. Now if you will take my gun we shall get along merrily."

They walked fast for about two miles. Wilfrid several times offered to get down, saying that he could walk again for a bit, but Mr. Atherton would not hear of it. At the end of two miles they reached the spot where the country was covered with low scrub.

"We are pretty safe now," Mr. Atherton said; "we can turn off from the track and take to the scrub or shelter, and there will be little chance of their finding us. Now, Wilfrid, I will set you down for a bit. This is fine exercise for me, and if I were to carry you a few miles every day I should fine down wonderfully. Ah! the others have come up." He broke off as the sound of a native yell sounded on the still night air, and looking round they saw a bright light rising in the direction from which they had come.

"They have set fire to the house," the settler said; "there goes the result of six years' work. However, I need not grumble over that now that we have saved our lives."

"We had best be moving on," Mr. Atherton said. "No doubt they opened a heavy fire before they set fire to the shingles with their brands, but the fact that we did not return their fire must have aroused their suspi-

cions, and by this time they must have woke up to the fact that we have escaped. They will hunt about for a bit, no doubt, round the house, and may send a few men some distance along the tracks, but they will know there is very little chance of catching us until daylight. Now, Sampson, let us join arms, your right and my left. Wilfrid can sit on them and put his arm round our neck. We carry our rifles on our other shoulders, and that will balance matters. That is right. Now on we go again."

With occasional halts they went on for another four hours. By this time the ladies and the little girl were completely exhausted from stumbling over roots and low shrubs in the darkness, and the two men also were thoroughly fatigued; for the night was extremely hot, and the work of carrying Wilfrid in addition to the weight of their ammunition told upon them. They had long since lost the path, but knew by the stars that they were keeping in the right direction.

"Now we will have a few hours' halt," Mr. Atherton said. "We may consider ourselves as perfectly safe from pursuit, though we shall have to be cautious, for there may be parties of these scoundrels wandering about the country. We may hope that a good many of the settlers heard the firing and made off in time, but I fear we shall hear some sad stories of this night's work."

Lying down the whole party were in a few minutes fast asleep. Wilfrid had offered to keep watch, saying that he had done no walking and could very well keep awake, but Mr. Atherton said that nothing would be gained by it. "You could see nothing, and you would hear nothing until a party of natives were quite close, and unless they happened by sheer accident to stumble upon us they could not find us; beside, though you have done no absolute walking, the exertion of sitting up

and holding on has been quite as much for you in your weak state as carrying you has been for us. No, we had best all take a rest so as to start fresh in the morning."

Mr. Atherton woke as soon as daylight broke, and rousing himself cautiously looked round. There was nothing in sight, and he decided to let the party sleep for a few hours longer. It was eight o'clock, and the sun was high before the others opened their eyes.

Mr. Atherton was standing up. "There is a horseman coming across the plain," he said; "no doubt he is following the track; by the line he is taking he will pass a little to our right. I will go out to hear the news. I think you had better remain where you are; he may be followed."

Mr. Atherton walked through the bush until he reached the track just as the rider came along.

"Ah! you have escaped, Mr. Atherton; I am glad of that. Have all your party got away?"

"Yes, thank God!" Mr. Atherton said; "and now what is the news?"

"I cannot tell all," the settler said, "but there has been a terrible massacre. I was pressing wool for Dodd and Peppard, whose station, you know, lies some distance from any other. I rode up there just as day was breaking and went to the woolshed. Nobody came, and I heard the dog barking angrily; so I went up to the house to see what was the matter. I found the back-door open and the two men lying dead inside, evidently killed by natives. I then galloped off to the Mission Station and warned them there, and then to the stations of Hawthorne and Strong. I found they had already been warned, and were just about to start; then I rode to Matawhero to warn the settlers there. Most of them had already made off. I passed Bigg's house on the

way; there were a number of natives round it evidently in possession, and as I passed Mann's house I saw him and his wife and child lying outside dead. How many more have been murdered I do not know. It is an awful business. Where are your friends?"

"They are in the scrub there. We are making our way to the Mahia."

"Most of the settlers who have escaped have made for the old redoubt at Taranganui, and I fancy they will be able to beat off any attack made on them. I am riding for Wairoa. I cannot think what they can have been about there to let Te Kooti slip away without sending us a warning. He must have come by the long road and been six or seven days on the march."

"Have you seen any natives since you started?" Mr. Atherton asked.

"I saw a party of about twenty of them moving across the country about two miles back. They were scattered about in the bush, and were, I expect, in search of fugitives. They were moving across the line I was going, and were half a mile away; but when they come on this path they may follow it, knowing that those who made their escape and did not go to the redoubt would be likely to try to reach the Mahia country."

"Thank you! then we will be moving on without delay," Mr. Atherton said; and the settler at once rode on with his message to the force at Wairoa. As soon as Mr. Atherton joined the party and told them what he had heard they again set out. After walking for four miles they reached the edge of the plain, and the path here ascended a sharp rise and entered a narrow defile.

Wilfrid, who was sitting on Mr. Atherton's shoulders, looked back for the twentieth time as they ascended the rise. "They are following us!" he exclaimed. "There

are a party of fifteen or twenty coming along the path at a run. They are not more than a mile behind at the outside."

"Then I will put you down, Wilfrid," Mr. Atherton said quietly; "that will give me time to cool down a bit before they arrive. They could not have come up at a better place for us. It is no use trying to hide, they would track us directly. We must make a stand at the mouth of this defile. It is a good place for defense, and if it were not for this rascally bush we should have no difficulty in keeping them off. Even as it is I think we can make a good fight of it. Now, Mrs. Renshaw, will you and Mrs. Sampson and the child go a little way in and sit down. I have no doubt we shall be able to beat these fellows back, and if we do that we can hope to make the rest of our journey without further molestation."

"Could I be of any use in loading the rifles, Mr. Atherton?"

"I think not, Mrs. Renshaw; it may be a long skirmish, and we shall have plenty of time to load; and your being here with us and running the risk of being hit would make us nervous. I think, if you do not mind, we would much rather know that you are in safety behind us."

"Very well," Mrs. Renshaw said quietly; "I will do what you think best. We shall be praying for your success until it is over."

Mr. Atherton looked round after the two ladies had gone on. "There is a bush with a wide ledge of flat ground behind it," he said, pointing to a little clump of underwood some ten feet above them on the side of the ravine. "I think, with my help, you can manage to clamber up there, Wilfrid. Lying down you will be

able to fire under the bush and be in fair shelter. Mr. Sampson and I will hold the path here. If they make a rush you will be able to help us with your revolver. Up there you will have the advantage of being able to see movements among the bushes better than we shall, and can fire down at them; and if it comes to a hand-to-hand fight will be of more use there than down here."

Wilfrid at once assented. "Stand on my hand and I will hoist you up." Mr. Atherton raised Wilfrid until he was able to get on to the ledge of rock behind the bushes. Wilfrid laid himself down there, and with his knife cut off a few of the lower twigs so that he was able to get a good view ahead. "Keep yourself well back, lad, and do not raise your head except to fire. Do you see anything of them?"

"Yes, they are not more than a quarter of a mile away and are scattering among the bushes. No doubt they caught sight of us as we came up here, and think it possible we may intend to defend the defile."

"I will let them know we are here;" and Mr. Atherton made two steps forward to the mouth of the defile. Almost at the same instant he leveled his rifle and fired, and one of the Maoris threw up his arms and fell back, the rest throwing themselves down instantaneously among the bushes, whence a moment later two or three shots were fired. But Mr. Atherton had stepped back, and he and the settler, lying down on the ground, worked themselves forward until by raising their heads they could command a vew of the slope up to the mouth of the ravine.

For a time all was silent. Presently Wilfrid's rifle spoke out, and a yell testified to the fact that the quick aim he had taken at a dark figure stealing among the bushes had been true. It was followed quickly by a

general discharge of their pieces by the natives. The bullets rattled thickly against the rock, and cut leaves from the bushes behind which Wilfrid was lying, but he had drawn himself back a foot or two the moment he fired, and the balls passed harmlessly over him. Not so the missive dispatched by Mr. Atherton in the direction of a puff of smoke from a bush some forty yards away, for the figure behind it remained still and immovable while the fray went on. For upward of an hour the exchange of shots continued, and then the assailants were joined by fifteen other natives, who had been attracted to the spot by the sound of firing.

"I expect they will pluck up their courage to make a rush now, Wilfrid," Mr. Atherton said. "If it had not been for these new arrivals I think they would have soon drawn off, for we must have diminished their numbers very considerably. Don't fire again for a bit; we had best keep our rifles loaded so as to be ready for them when they pluck up courage to charge. When they do, be sure you keep your revolver as a reserve for the critical moment."

Five minutes later a tremendous yell rose in the air. The natives leaped to their feet from behind the bushes, fired their guns at their hidden foes, and then, tomahawk in hand, rushed forward.

Three shots rang out almost simultaneously from the mouth of the defile and three of the natives dropped dead in their tracks. The rest rushed forward in a body. Mr. Atherton and the settler leaped to their feet, and the former opened a fire with his Colt's revolver when the leading natives were within ten yards of him. His aim was as accurate as when directed against a mark stuck against a tree, and a man fell at each shot. But the natives' blood was thoroughly up now, and in spite of

the slaughter they rushed forward. There was no room in the narrow defile for two men to swing their rifles, and Mr. Atherton and the settler stepped forward to meet the foe with their clubbed rifle in their hands. Two crashing blows were delivered with effect, but before the settler could again raise his weapon three Maoris were upon him. One tomahawk struck him in the shoulder and the rifle fell from his hands. Another raised his tomahawk to brain him, but fell with a bullet from Wilfrid's revolver through his chest; but the third native brought his weapon down with terrible force upon the settler's head, and he fell in a heap upon the ground. The tremendous strength of Mr. Atherton stood him in good stead now. The first blow he had dealt had smashed the stock of his rifle, but he whirled the iron barrel like a light twig round his head, dealing blows that broke down the defense of the natives as if their tomahawks had been straw, and beating them down as a flail would level a wheat stalk. Those in front of him recoiled from a strength which seemed to them superhuman, while whenever one tried to attack him in the rear Wilfrid's revolver came into play with fatal accuracy. At last, with a cry of terror, the surviving natives turned and retreated at the top of their speed.

"Hot work, Wilfrid," Mr. Atherton said as he lowered his terrible weapon and wiped the streaming perspiration from his face; "but we have given the rascals such a lesson that we can journey on at our leisure. This is a bad business of poor Sampson's. I will help you down first and then we will see to him. Recharge your revolver, lad," he went on as Wilfrid stood beside him; "some of these fellows may not be dead, and may play us an ugly trick if we are not on the lookout."

Wilfrid reloaded his pistol, and Mr. Atherton then stooped over the fallen man.

"He is desperately hurt," he said, "but he breathes. Hand me that revolver, Wilfrid, and run back and tell Mrs. Sampson her husband is hurt."

Wilfrid had gone but a yard or two when he met his mother and the settler's wife, who, hearing the cessation of the firing, were no longer able to restrain their anxiety as to what was going forward. Mrs. Renshaw gave a cry of joy at seeing Wilfrid walking toward her.

"Is it all over, my boy, and are you unhurt?"

"It is all over, mother, and they have bolted. I have not had a scratch, for I have been lying down all the time in shelter; but I am sorry to say, Mrs. Sampson, that your husband is badly hurt.

"No, he is not dead," he continued in answer to the agonized expression of inquiry in her eyes. "He has been stunned by the blow of a tomahawk, and is, as I said, badly hurt; but he will, I trust, get over it."

Mrs. Sampson ran forward and threw herself on her knees by her husband's side, uttering a suppressed cry as she saw the terrible wound on his head.

"Wilfrid, there is a bottle of water untouched in the basket," Mr. Atherton said.

"I will fetch it," Mrs. Renshaw broke in, hurrying away. "No, Milly," she said, as the child who had been ordered to stay with the basket came running to meet her. "You must stay here for a little while. The natives have all run away, but your father is hurt and for a time must be kept quite quiet. I will send Wilfrid to sit with you."

Taking a bottle of water and a cloth which covered the basket, Mrs. Renshaw hurried back. "Wilfrid," she said, "do you go and sit with the little one. You can do no good here, and look completely worn out. You will be making yourself useful if you amuse Milly and keep her away from here for the present."

Mr. Atherton poured a little of the water into the cover of his flask, added some brandy, and poured a little of it between the wounded man's lips. Then he saturated the cloth with water and handed it to Mrs. Sampson, who wiped the blood from her husband's head and face, then poured a little water from the bottle on to his forehead. Some more brandy and water was poured between his lips and he uttered a faint groan.

"I will examine his wound now, Mrs. Sampson. I have had some experience that way in my journeyings about the world." Kneeling down he carefully examined the wound.

"It is better than I hoped, Mrs. Sampson," he said cheerfully. "I expect the thick hat turned the tomahawk a little and it fell obliquely on the side of the head. It has carried away a goodish slice of the hair and scalp, and has scraped the bone, but it has not crushed it in, and I think that with care and nursing your husband will not be long before he gets over it. You had better fold up that cloth again, pour some fresh water over it, and then bandage it over the wound with a slip of stuff torn off from the bottom of your petticoat. You had better tear off two slips, for his arm will require bandaging too. I will look to that as soon as you have done his head. No," he went on, when he saw that Mrs. Sampson's trembling fingers were quite incapable of fixing the bandage properly, "I do not think that will do. If you will allow me I will do it for you."

He took Mrs. Sampson's place, and while Mrs. Renshaw supported the settler's head he wound the bandage tightly and skillfully round it. "Now for his arm," he said, and drawing out his knife cut the sleeve up the shoulder. "It has narrowly missed the artery," he went on; "but though it is an ugly-looking gash it is not seri-

ous. I wish we had some more water, but as we haven't we must do without it, and I dare say we shall come across a stream soon." When the operation of bandaging was complete Mr. Atherton stood up.

"What are we to do next?" Mrs. Renshaw asked him.

"We must cut a couple of saplings and make a litter," he said. "If one of you ladies can spare a petticoat, please take it off while I cut the poles." He went away and returned in a few minutes with two poles ten or eleven feet long.

"Here is the petticoat," Mrs. Renshaw said. The settler's wife was too absorbed by her grief and anxiety to hear Mr. Atherton's request. "What is to be done with it?"

"In the first place it must be taken out of that band, or whatever you call it," Mr. Atherton replied, "and then split right down. Here is my knife."

When the garment had been operated upon there remained a length of strong calico nearly three feet wide and three yards long. "That will do well," he said. "Now we have to fasten this to the poles. How would you do that? It is more in your way than mine."

"I should roll it twice round the pole and then sew it, if I had a needle and thread. If I had not that I should make holes in every six inches and tie it with string; but unfortunately we have no string either."

"I think we can manage that," Mr. Atherton said; and he walked rapidly away and returned in a few minutes with some long stalks that looked like coarse grass.

"This is the very thing, Mrs. Renshaw," he said; "this is what is called New Zealand flax, and I have no doubt it will be strong enough for our purpose." In a quarter of an hour the litter was completed. Just as it

was finished Mrs. Sampson uttered an exclamation of joy, and turning round, they saw that her husband had opened his eyes and was looking round in a dazed, bewildered way.

"It is all right, Sampson," Mr. Atherton said cheerfully; "we have thrashed the natives handsomely; they have bolted, and there is no fear of their coming back again. You have had a clip on the head with a tomahawk, but I do not think that you will be much the worse, for it at the end of a week or two. We have just been manufacturing a litter for you, and now we will lift you on to it. Now, ladies, I will take him by the shoulders; will you take him by the feet, Mrs. Renshaw; and do you, Mrs. Sampson, support his head? That is the way. Now, I will just roll up my coat and put it under his head, and then I think he will do; lay our rifles beside him. Now, I will take the two handles at his head; do you each take one at his feet. The weight will not be great, and you can change about when your arms get tired. Yes, I see what you are thinking about, Mrs. Renshaw. We must go along bit by bit. We will carry our patient here for half a mile, then I will come back and fetch Wilfrid up to that point, then we will go on again and so on."

"All the hard work falls on you, Mr. Atherton; it is too bad," Mrs. Renshaw said with grateful tears in her eyes.

"It will do me a world of good, Mrs. Renshaw. I must have lost over a stone weight since yesterday. If this sort of thing were to go on for a few weeks I should get into fighting condition. Now, are you both ready? Lift."

In a short time they came to the point where Wilfrid and the child were sitting down together. Wilfrid had

been impressing upon her that her father was hurt, and that she must be very good and quiet, and walk along quietly by her mother's side. So when they came along she got up and approached them with a subdued and awe-struck air. She took the hand her mother held out to her.

"Is father very bad, mother?" she asked in a low tone.

"He is better than he was, dear, and we must hope and pray that he will soon be well again; but at present you must not speak to him. He must be kept very quiet and not allowed to talk."

"You sit where you are, Wilfrid, I will come back for you in half an hour," Mr. Atherton said.

"That you won't, Mr. Atherton," Wilfrid said, getting up. "I have had a long rest, for, except for pulling my trigger and loading, I have done nothing since the first short walk when we started this morning. All this excitement has done me a lot of good, and I feel as if I could walk ever so far."

"Well, put your rifle in the litter, then," Mr. Atherton said; "its weight will make no difference to us, and it will make a lot of difference to you; when you are tired say so."

Wilfrid struggled on resolutely, refusing to stop until they reached a stream two miles from the starting place. Here they rested for an hour. The settler's wounds were washed and rebandaged, the others partook of a meal of bread and water, and they then continued the journey. At the end of another half-mile Wilfrid was obliged to own that his strength could hold out no longer, but he refused positively to accept Mr. Atherton's proposal to come back for him.

"I will not hear of it, Mr. Atherton," he said. "From what Mrs. Sampson says it is another eight or ten miles

to the Mahia country. There is not the least fear of any of the Hau-Haus following on our track. The best way by far is this: I will go a hundred yards into the bush and lie down. You push on. It will be dark before you finish your journey as it is; you would not get there till to-morrow morning if you had to keep on coming back for me; beside, you would never get on with the litter after it is dark. Leave me a piece of bread, a bottle of water, my rifle and revolver, and I shall be as comfortable among the bushes there as if I were in bed. In the morning you can send out a party of Mahias to fetch me in. If you break down a small bough here by the side of the way, that will be quite sufficient to tell the natives where they are to turn off from the path to look for me."

"Well, I really think that is the best plan, Wilfrid. There is, as you say, no real danger in your stopping here alone. It would be a long job coming back for you every time we halt, and it is of importance to get Mr. Sampson laid down and quiet as soon as possible."

Mrs. Renshaw did not like leaving Wilfrid alone; but she saw that she could be of no real assistance to him, and her aid was absolutely required to carry the wounded man. She therefore offered no objections to the proposal.

"Don't look downcast, mother," Wilfrid said as he kissed her. "The weather is fine, and there is no hardship whatever in a night in the bush, especially after what we went through when we were following Te Kooti."

Wilfrid made his way a hundred yards back into the bush and then threw himself down under a tree fern, and in a very few minutes he was sound asleep. The next time he woke all was dark around him.

"I must have slept a good many hours," he said. "I feel precious hungry." He ate a hunch of bread, took

a drink of water from the bottle, and soon fell asleep again. The morning was breaking when he again woke. A quarter of an hour later he heard voices, and cocking his rifle and lying down full length on the grass waited. In another minute to his joy he heard Mr. Atherton's voice shouting, "Where are you, Wilfrid? Where have you hidden yourself?"

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PURSUIT OF TE KOOTI.

He leaped to his feet and ran forward. Mr. Atherton was approaching, accompanied by a party of six natives.

"Why, Mr. Atherton, I was not expecting you for another three hours."

"Well, you see, Wilfrid, your mother was anxious about you. She did not say anything, for she is a plucky woman, and not given to complaining or grumbling, still I could see she was anxious, so I arranged with these natives to be ready to start three hours before daybreak, so as to get here just as the sun was rising."

"It was awfully kind of you, Atherton; but surely the natives would have been able to find me without your troubling yourself to come all this way again. I am sure you must have been dreadfully tired after all your work yesterday."

"Well, Wilfrid, perhaps I was just a little bit anxious myself about you, and should have fussed and fidgeted until you got back; so you see the quickest way to satisfy myself was to come with the natives."

"What time did you get in last night?"

"About eight o'clock in the evening, I think. We were all pretty well knocked up, but the two ladies bore it bravely, so you see I had no excuse for grumbling."

"I am sure you would not have grumbled anyhow," Wilfrid laughed; "but I know that when one is carrying any one the weight at the head is more than double the

weight at the feet, and that was divided between them, while you had the heavy end all to yourself. And how is Sampson?"

"I think he will do, Wilfrid. The natives took him in hand as soon as he got there, and put leaf poultices to his wounds. They are very good at that sort of thing, and so they ought to be considering they have been breaking each others' heads almost from the days of Adam. Well, let us be off. We have brought the stretcher with us, and shall get you back in no time."

Wilfrid lay down upon the stretcher. Four of the natives lifted it and went off at a light swinging pace. From time to time changes were made, the other two natives taking their share. Had they been alone the natives could have made the ten miles' journey under the two hours, but Mr. Atherton reduced their speed directly after they had started.

"I have not been killed by the Hau-Haus, Wilfrid, and I do not mean to let myself be killed by friendly natives. Three miles an hour is my pace, and except in a case of extreme emergency I never exceed it. I have no wish, when I get back to England, to be exhibited as a walking skeleton.

"It is good to hear you laugh again, lad," he went on as Wilfrid burst into a shout of laughter, to the astonishment of his four bearers. "I was afraid six weeks back that we should never hear you laugh again."

"Oh, Mr. Atherton!" Wilfrid exclaimed a few minutes later, "were there any other of the Poverty Bay people there last night, and have you heard what took place and whether many beside those we know of have lost their lives?"

"Yes; I am sorry to say it has been a very bad business. As we heard from Butters, Dodd and Reppart

were killed, and there is no doubt that their shepherd was also slaughtered. Major Biggs, poor fellow, has paid for his obstinacy and overconfidence with his life. His wife, baby, and servant were also killed. The news of this was brought by a boy employed in the house, who escaped by the back door and hid in a flax bush. Captain Wilson, his wife, and children have all been murdered. McCulloch was killed with his wife and baby; the little boy managed to escape, and got to the redoubt at Taranganui. Cadel was also killed. Fortunately Firmin heard the sound of musketry in the night. He started at dawn to see what was the matter. He met a native, who told him that the Hau-Haus were massacring the whites, and at once rode off and warned Wylie, Stevenson, Benson, Hawthorne and Strong; and these all escaped with their families, and with Major Westrupp got safely to the Mahia people.

"The boy who escaped from Major Biggs' house reached Bloomfields, and all the women and children there managed to escape. How they did it heaven only knows, for the Hau-Haus were all round. That is all we know at present, and we hope that the rest of the settlers of the outlying stations round Matawhero succeeded in getting into Taranganui. Whether the Hau-Haus will be satisfied with the slaughter they have effected, or will try to penetrate further into the settlement or attack Taranganui, remains to be seen. Of course the people who have escaped are, like ourselves, ignorant of everything that has taken place except what happened in their immediate neighborhood. I should fancy, myself, that however widespread the massacre may have been, the Hau-Haus started last night on their way back. They would know that as soon as the news reached Wairoa the force there will be on the move to cut them off."

"Do you think they will succeed?" Wilfrid asked eagerly.

"I do not think so, Wilfrid. If Colonel Whitmore were there they would have routed out Te Kooti long ago, but Colonel Lambert seems a man of a different stamp altogether. Why, I heard last night that he marched six days ago to Whataroa, quite close to Te Kooti's place, and that a prisoner they took gave them positive information that the Hau-Haus there had all left to assist Te Kooti in a raid upon Poverty Bay. It seems they did not believe the news at any rate, although a mail left for Poverty Bay on the day after they returned to Wairoa, they sent no news whatever of the report they had heard. If they had done so there would have been plenty of time for the settlers to prepare for the attack.

"It is one of the most scandalous cases of neglect that I ever heard of, and Lambert ought to be tried by court-martial, though that would not bring all these people to life again. However there is one thing certain—the news of this affair will create such a sensation throughout the island that even the incapable government at Auckland, who have disregarded all the urgent requests for aid against Te Kooti, will be forced to do something, and I sincerely hope they will dispatch Whitmore with a strong force of constabulary to wipe out Te Kooti and his band. It is curious how things come about. Almost all these poor fellows who have been killed belong to the Poverty Bay militia, who refused to press on with Whitmore in pursuit of Te Kooti. Had they done so, the addition of thirty white men to his force might have made all the difference in that fight you had with him, and in that case Te Kooti would have been driven far up the country and this massacre would never have taken place."

It was a great relief to Mrs. Renshaw when Wilfrid reached the village. She was not given to idle fears, and felt convinced that he was running no real danger; for she knew Mr. Atherton would not have left him by himself had he not been perfectly convinced there was no danger of pursuit. Still she felt a weight lifted off her mind when she saw the party entering the village.

"Well, mother, you must have had a terrible journey of it yesterday," Wilfrid said, after he had assured her that he felt none the worse for what had passed, and was indeed stronger and better than he had been two days before.

"It was a terrible journey, Wilfrid. Fourteen miles does not seem such a very long distance to walk, though I do not suppose I ever walked as far since I was a girl; but the weight of the stretcher made all the difference. It did not feel much when we started, but it soon got heavier as we went on; and though we changed sides every few minutes it seemed at last as if one's arms were being pulled out of their sockets. We could never have done it if it had not been for Mr. Atherton. He kept us cheery the whole time. It seems ridiculous to remember that he has always been representing himself as unequal to any exertion. He was carrying the greater part of the weight, and indeed five miles before we got to the end of our journey, seeing how exhausted we were becoming, he tied two sticks six feet long to our end of the poles, and in that way made the work a great deal lighter for us, and of course a great deal heavier for himself. He declared he hardly felt it, for by that time I had torn two wide strips from the bottom of my dress, tied them together, and put them over his shoulders and fastened them to the two poles; so that he got the weight on his shoulders instead of his hands. But in addition to Mr.

Sampson's weight he carried Milly perched on his shoulder the last eight miles. He is a noble fellow."

"He did not say anything about carrying Milly," Wilfrid said, "or of taking all the weight of the litter. He is a splendid fellow, mother."

"He was terribly exhausted when he got in," Mrs. Renshaw said; "and was looking almost as pale as death when we went into the light in the hut where the other fugitives had assembled. As soon as the others relieved him of the weight of the litter, and lifted Milly down from his shoulder, he went out of the hut. As soon as I had seen Mr. Sampson well cared for, I went out to look for him, and found he had thrown himself down on the ground outside, and was lying there, I thought at first insensible, but he wasn't. I stooped over him and he said, 'I am all right, Mrs. Renshaw, but I was not up to answering questions. In half an hour I shall be myself again, but I own that I feel washed out at present.' I took him out a glass of brandy and water, he drank it and said, 'I feel ashamed of being waited on by you, Mrs. Renshaw, when you must be as tired as I am. Please do not bother any more about me, but if you will ask one of the others to get a native blanket to throw over me to keep off the dew I shall be all right in the morning; but I do not feel that I could get on my feet again to-night if a fortune depended on it.' Of course I did as he asked me, and I was perfectly stupefied this morning when I heard that he had been up at two o'clock and had gone off with a party of natives to bring you in."

"It was awfully good of him," Wilfrid said, "and he never said a word to me about it. Where is he?" and he looked round. But Mr. Atherton had disappeared. "Have you seen Mr. Atherton?" they asked Mr. Wylie,

as he came out of a large hut that had been given up for the use of the fugitives."

"He has just had a glass of spirits and water—unfortunately we had no tea to offer him—and a piece of bread, and has taken a blanket and has gone off to an empty hut; he said he intended to sleep until to-morrow morning," and indeed it was not until next day that Mr. Atherton again appeared.

Several friendly natives arrived one after another at the village. They brought the news that the Hau-Haus had attacked only the colonists round Matawairo, and that all the rest of the settlers were gathered at Taranganui; but the Hau-Haus were plundering all the deserted houses, and were shooting down all the natives who refused to join them. It was afterward found indeed that the natives had suffered even more severely than the whites, for while thirty-three of the latter were murdered thirty-seven of the natives were killed. Major Westrupp had left by ship for Napier to obtain assistance, Lieutenant Gascoigne had made his way safely through the Hau-Haus to Taranganui, and had sent a whaleboat out to a schooner that was seen passing down the coast. She at once came into the port, and the women and children were sent off to Napier. The garrison of the fort had been reinforced by the friendly natives under their chief Henare Potare, and were awaiting the expected attack by Te Kooti.

A week later news came that Major Westrupp and Captain Tuke had arrived from Napier with three hundred natives, and that the Hau-Haus had retired with their plunder. The party at Te Mahia at once started for the coast accompanied by some thirty men of the Mahia tribe. A wagon had been procured for the transport of the women and children, and a march of twenty-

four miles took them to Taranganui. They found that parties had been out the day before to bury the dead, and had brought in two persons who were supposed to have been murdered. As one of the parties were going along they saw a small poodle dog run into a bush, and recognized it as having belonged to Captain Wilson. They called and whistled to it in vain, and came to the conclusion that some one must be in hiding there. After half an hour's search they discovered little James Wilson with the dog tightly held in his arms; the boy was too frightened to distinguish friend from foe, and was greatly delighted when he recognized one of the party. He told them that his mother was alive, and was lying wounded in an outhouse at their place. He had lost his way while trying to reach Taranagnui to bring help to her. Captain Wilson had defended his house with a revolver until the natives brought fire to burn him out. As they offered to spare the lives of all within if they surrendered, Captain Wilson, thinking that there was a possibility of their keeping their word while those within would certainly be burned if they resisted, surrendered. The prisoners were being led along by their captors, Captain Wilson carrying the little boy, when the natives fell upon them. Captain Wilson was shot through the back, his servant, Morau, tomahawked, and Mrs. Wilson and the other children bayoneted. Captain Wilson, when shot, fell into a bush, and the little boy in the confusion crawled away unnoticed into the scrub. He had wandered about sleeping in outhouses for several nights, often close to the enemy, and at last found his way back to what had been his home, and found the bodies of his father, brothers, and sisters, and on going into an outhouse for shelter found his mother alive there.

She had been bayoneted in several places and beaten

on the head with the butt of a rifle until they thought her dead. Later in the day she had recovered consciousness and crawled back to the house, where she got some water and then took refuge in the outhouse, where two or three days later she was found by her son. She had since been kept alive by eggs and other things the child found by foraging round; but he had at last started to try to get assistance for her.

After hearing the child's story the party had galloped on to Captain Wilson's, and the poor lady had been found and carried to Taranganui. A few days later she was sent down to Napier by ship, but expired shortly after from the effects of her wounds.

In the week that elapsed between the date of the massacre and their return to the settlement Wilfrid had regained his strength wonderfully, and the bracing air of the hills and the excitement of the events through which he passed had acted as a complete restorative. Mr. Atherton too had completely recovered from his fatigue, and indeed, professed himself to have benefited greatly by them, as he maintained that in three days he had lost as many stone of flesh. The morning after their return to Taranganui they had a long talk about their plans. It was settled that Mrs. Renshaw should at once return home. She was most anxious that Wilfrid should accompany her; but this he would not consent to.

"No, mother," he said; "it is my duty, and every one's duty, to aid in hunting down these murderous scoundrels. They have massacred a number of people who were very kind to me when I first became ill, and I will do my best to punish them; besides, until Te Kooti's band is destroyed there will be no peace or safety for any of the outlying settlements, and they are just as

likely to make an attack on our settlement as any other; indeed, we are the nearest to them, therefore in fighting here I am fighting for the protection of our home."

Mr. Atherton also announced his intention of accompanying the column in pursuit of Te Kooti.

"I dislike fatigue amazingly," he said, "but for several reasons I feel myself bound to see this affair through to the end. In the first place they have attacked me and caused me to undergo great fatigue; in the second, they have murdered a number of my acquaintances; in the third place I have to look after this boy and see that he gets into no mischief; and lastly, it really seems to me that a month or two of this sort of thing will absolutely reduce me to ordinary dimensions, a thing which I have for years given up even hoping for."

"Well, Wilfrid," Mrs. Renshaw said at last, "I suppose you must have your way. I do think that, as you say, it is the duty of everyone to do all that he can to punish the people who have committed these massacres upon defenseless people, and it is necessary for the safety of the settlement that Te Kooti's band shall be destroyed. It is very hard on us to know that our only son is fighting; but other men as well have to leave perhaps wives and children behind, and if only those without ties were to go the force would be a small one indeed. It is a comfort to me, Mr. Atherton, that you have made up your mind to go too. It sounds selfish of me to say so; but I suppose all mothers are selfish when their sons are concerned."

"I understand your feeling, Mrs. Renshaw, and it is quite natural. I do think that everyone who can carry a musket ought to join in this expedition, and I flatter myself that Wilfrid's rifle and mine are allies not to be despised. Anyhow, Mrs. Renshaw, I promise you that

we will not do what are called rash things. We won't try to capture Te Kooti single-handed, and I think that we can be much more useful covering an attack than leading an assault."

Accordingly, two days later Mrs. Renshaw embarked on a coaster for the Mohaka river, and Mr. Atherton and Wilfrid announced to Lieutenant Gascoigne that they would accompany his force as volunteers.

"I am heartily glad to hear it," that officer replied. "I have heard from Wylie of your defense of that pass against the Hau-Haus, and yesterday I had a talk with Sampson, who is getting round now, and he gave me the history of the affair, and from what he says you and Renshaw must have killed at least twenty Hau-Haus, for Sampson admits that he is not much of a shot and had a very small share in the total."

"Yes; we can both shoot indifferently well," Mr. Atherton said carelessly, "and can both be trusted to hit a Maori if we see him within about four hundred yards of us. I fancy that we may be of serivce to you in keeping down the fire of the enemy if you are attacking a pah. There is nothing cows fellows so much as finding that it is certain death to raise their heads from behind shelter to take aim. Of course we shall be ready generally to obey orders, but that is the special work we join for. You see, Renshaw is but just recovering from illness, and my build unsuits me for violent exertion. So if you want to storm a steep hill you must not count on us being with you except so far as shooting goes."

"Well, I will take you on your own terms," Lieutenant Gascoigne said, smiling. "Mrs. Sampson told me yesterday how disinclined you were for violent exertion, and how she had to help you along on that journey to Te Mahia."

Mr. Atherton laughed. "There are exceptions to all rules," he said. "I am a peaceful botanist, but I had to fight. I hate exertion, but on that occasion I was forced to make an effort, and terribly knocked up I was over it. If it becomes absolutely necessary I may have to make an effort again, but I consider it altogether outside my province."

The expedition started on the following morning, the 20th of November. It consisted of nearly six hundred natives belonging to the Napier tribes, the Mahia, and Marsuwai tribes. The next day they came upon the rearguard of the Hau-Hau tribes of Patutahi and shot two of them. Great quantities of booty which the Hau-Haus were unable to carry away were found there, together with the bodies of several friendly natives. The next day another encampment was come upon, and here the carts taken from the plundered farms were found. At dusk on the 23d the column came up with the main body of the enemy, who were encamped on the Te Karetua creek.

A heavy fire was opened on both sides, and the natives then charged, but were driven back with a loss of five killed and twelve wounded. Mr. Atherton and Wilfrid, who were walking leisurely in the rear of the column when it came on the enemy, arrived too late to take any part in the fight. After the repulse the friendly natives took up a position on a ridge overlooking the Hau-Hau positions and distant twelve hundred yards from it. Rifle-pits were dug, and for the next week firing was kept up by both sides, with occasional skirmishes as one party or the other tried to take the offensive, but neither cared to try a determined attack on the other.

The Hau-Haus had lost twenty men during the first day's fighting, and suffered more in the distant firing,

especially whenever they gathered as if for an attack, than did the friendlies. This was owing in no small degree to the accuracy of Mr. Atherton's fire. He had got some of the natives to dig a rifle-pit three or four hundred yards down the hill in front of their position, and here he and Wilfrid ensconced themselves every morning before daybreak, taking down with them their provisions for the day, and from this point they galled the Hau-Haus greatly with their fire. Wilfrid knew that his shooting could not be depended upon at this distance; but Mr. Atherton had been accustomed to fire at long ranges, and although at eight hundred yards his rifle was not accurate he did considerable execution, and so alarmed the Hau-Haus that they scarcely dared to move by daylight from one part of their intrenchment to the other. The friends always left their shelter and retired to camp as soon as the sun set.

The Hau-Haus were not, however, idle. A party of sixty men made a long circuit and came down in rear of the column, captured the depot at Patutahi with eight kegs of ammunition and a great quantity of provisions, and also seized a number of pack animals on the way up. On the 3d of December the force was strengthened by the arrival of the chiefs Rapata and Hotene, with three hundred and seventy men from Te Wairoa. These chiefly belonged to the Ngatiporou tribe, who were far better fighters than the Napier or Mahia men.

As soon as the reinforcements had arrived it was decided at once to dislodge the enemy from a hill of which they had possession and then to make a general attack on the intrenchments. Forty men of the Wairoa tribe under Mr. Preece made a dashing attack on the hill, and just as they carried it Rapata sent a message to him to say that his tribesmen were annoyed by the enemy's shot

falling into their camp, and were therefore determined to attack at once. That tribe, sallying out, carried two of the enemy's outworks with a rush, and drove the Hau-Haus back to their last line of rifle-pits near the river. Here they were attacked by the Wairoa men on the left, Rapata in the center, and the tribesmen from Napier on the right. The assailants carried the intrenchment and drove the Hau-Haus across the river, these suffering heavy loss from the firing of the left column, who from their position commanded the course of the stream.

Unfortunately this fire, though destructive to the enemy, was to a certain extent in their favor, for it prevented the close pursuit of Rapata's men. Thirty-four Hau-Haus, including three of their fighting chiefs, were found dead. Te Kooti himself had a narrow escape. He was still suffering from his wound in the ankle, and was carried up the bed of the creek on a woman's back. A great quantity of the loot taken from the settlers was recaptured, and many of the friendly natives held prisoners by the Hau-Haus escaped during the fight. Mr. Atherton and Wilfrid had joined Rapata's men in their charge, and after the fight was over the former said: "Well, Wilfrid, it is a satisfaction to have got some natives with us at last who will fight. It seemed at first as if all the plucky natives had joined the enemy; but Rapata's men are first-rate fellows, though I wish that they had rather an easier name, for Ngatiporou is a crack-jaw word to pronounce."

Unfortunately a quarrel arose after the battle between Rapata's men and the Napier tribesmen, and three hundred of the latter went off. The next morning Rapata and his tribe, with the remaining Wairoa men, marched out to attack the position the enemy occupied on the top of a hill two miles away. Mr. Preece led the ad-

vanced party, and found the defenses consisted of two lines of strong earthworks extending across a flat shoulder, either end resting on a cliff. Mr. Preece halted his men until Rapata came up with the main body. Wilfrid and Mr. Atherton had attached themselves to the Ngatiporou. Just as they joined Mr. Preece one of the men fired off a gun, and the enemy answered with a heavy volley. Instantly a panic set in, and the whole force, with the exception of some sixteen or eighteen men, bolted. One of the chiefs under Mr. Preece followed and managed to stop them, and persuaded them to wait until Rapata could return to them. This they agreed to do, but refused positively to return to the attack.

Mr. Preece returned to Rapata, who was in a state of fury at the defection of his tribe. "We will go on and attack the place by ourselves," he said. "Perhaps the cowards will come up when they hear we are fighting." Mr. Preece at once agreed, and the party, consisting of the two leaders, Mr. Atherton and Wilfrid, and fourteen of Rapata's men, worked back through the low scrub until within twenty-five yards of the first line of earthworks, when they opened fire upon the enemy.

"This is rather close work, Wilfrid," Mr. Atherton said. "We have the best of it in some respects, because they cannot make out our position among the bushes, and they are obliged to stand up and show their heads above the parapet when they fire. We ought never to miss them at this distance, and we will soon teach them that it is fatal to pause a moment to take aim, so at the worst they will only blaze away at random."

For some time the fight continued, and then Rapata requested Mr. Preece to go down the hill and bring up some more men. Only nine men would follow Mr. Preece, and Rapata was so disgusted that he himself went

down for some distance and managed to get thirty more. One of the men had brought a bill up with him, and with this shallow rifle-pits were dug among the bushes, affording a shelter to the men as they lay flat while loading. At three o'clock in the afternoon the chief called on his tribesmen to follow him, and, leaping up, they dashed at one of the outposts and carried it. A man took the news down the hill, and a chief and thirty more men came up and joined in the fight.

At dusk Rapata requested Mr. Preece to return to camp and try to get the main body back with ammunition, as their own was almost exhausted. Mr. Preece could not induce the natives to start, but they said they would go in the morning. All night the fight went on, but before dawn Rapata, having expended his last round of ammunition, retired, having lost six men killed and four wounded. As he and his men came down they strode through the camp in single file, not deigning to take the slightest notice of the fugitives, and passing on, camped apart half a mile further on. The main body, ashamed of their cowardly conduct, were afraid to go near the chief. As it was necessary to ascertain what he meant to do, one of the white officers went to see him.

For some time the chief would make no reply. At last he said, "My men have betrayed me, and I will have nothing further to do with them. I intend to return home and get other men, and when I get back I will attack the Napier tribe who deserted me."

The same day he marched for the coast, followed at a distance by the abashed fugitives. On the way down they met Colonel Whitmore, who with three hundred constabulary had just arrived by ship from the scene of operations on the other side of the island.

The colonel begged Rapata to return with him, but

the chief said, "I never break my word. I have said I will go home, and I will; but I will return with other men and attack the Napier tribes."

After much persuasion Colonel Whitmore got him to promise that he would not interfere with the Napier men; but nothing could persuade him to fight again with those men of his own tribe who had deserted him. Such being the case, a steamer was placed at his disposal in order that he might make the voyage and return as soon as possible.

After Rapata had left Colonel Whitmore sent out a skirmishing party to ascertain whether the enemy retained their position. The scouts returned with the news that there were great fires on the crest of the hill, and they believed that the Hau-Haus were burning their huts preparatory to returning into the interior. Colonel Whitmore believed the report, and considering that the Hau-Haus would leave the neighborhood of the settlement altogether, he ordered the constabulary to march down to the coast again as soon as possible and re-embark there, as their presence was urgently required in the north of the province of Wellington, which had been left open to the attack of the enemy there by their withdrawal.

Fortunately before they re-embarked Te Kooti showed his hand. He had no idea of retreating from his position, and the fires were caused by the clearing off of the scrub which had afforded shelter to Rapata's force. No sooner did he hear that Colonel Whitmore had marched away than he sent a party down against one of the outlying settlements, where they murdered Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Wylie's son, and a friendly native. Colonel Whitmore, on receiving news of the raid, marched rapidly to cut off the retreat of the Hau-Haus; but they managed to evade him and to retire to their main body.

On the 27th of December Colonel Whitmore's force occupied a high ridge a mile distant from Te Kooti's position. Here the colonel received news that Rapata had just landed with three hundred and seventy men, and messenger after messenger was sent down urging him to hurry up. The chief, who was seriously ill, was much annoyed by these messages, especially by the last, that if he did not come soon Whitmore would take the place without him. Rapata replied: "Very well, I have tried and failed; it is his turn now," and immediately ordered his men to camp for the day.

The next morning Colonel Whitmore came down himself, having been advised that the only way to succeed with Rapata was to treat him in a conciliatory way. The chief's first words were, "Have you taken the place?"

"No," Colonel Whitmore replied. "I am waiting for you, Rapata."

"Very good," Rapata said; "I will be with you tomorrow morning." The Ngatiporou performed a great war-dance, and as no one stumbled or fell they considered the omen to be good one, and marched on and joined Colonel Whitmore's force that night.

CHAPTER XVII.

BACK AT THE FARM.

The position of the Hau-Haus was naturally a very strong one, being at the top of a high conical peak rising abruptly from low bush-covered hills to a height of two thousand feet. On the face, which had been before attacked, the ground sloped gradually up to the summit, but on the right and left the slope was very steep, and at one point there had been a landslip leaving a perpendicular face twenty feet high, and below that, for fifty feet, it was so steep that it was difficult to get a footing. The ground in rear of the position narrowed into a razor-backed ridge down which a track led, with rope ladders to aid the descent of the rock terraces.

The position in front, where alone it could be attacked was defended by three lines of earthworks with high parapets, and with ditches in front abutting at either end on the steep slopes. The two lower works were seven feet high, the upper work was nearly fourteen feet high, with sandbag loopholes to enable the defenders to fire through. Each line was connected with the one above it by covered ways. Operations commenced by the advance of the Arawa division of the constabulary, and a portion of the Ngatiporou under Rapata. Advancing quietly and cautiously they came upon a party of the enemy engaged in carrying up water. They drove them up to the pah and took possession of the only water available.

Rifle-pits were now dug and pushed forward gradually until within a hundred yards of the enemy's first lines of defense. Number seven division of the constabulary were now sent up, and these threw up a long line of trenches parallel to the enemy's works; and the artillery-men having with great exertion brought up a mortar, a vertical shell-fire was opened upon the enemy's position with great effect; although to get them to the spot these shells had to be carried on the men's backs for three miles over some terrific ravines. A hundred constabulary under Colonel Fraser and a hundred Ngatiporou were sent round to cut off the enemy's retreat in rear. Another division of constabulary under Major Roberts connected the two parties, and thus all escape of the enemy was cut off, with the exception of the small piece of cliff, seventy yards in length, which was believed impossible to descend, and was moreover exposed to a flanking fire from Rapata's force in front and that of Colonel Fraser in the rear.

For some days heavy firing went on, and the hardships suffered by the force were great, for the rain fell without intermission. There were many casualties on both sides. Captain Brown of the constabulary was killed, and Captain Cabel of the same corps severely wounded. Colonel Fraser's men pushed up the ridge in the enemy's rear, and formed rifle-pits near the summit from which the Hau-Haus made desperate but vain attempts to repel them. On the 4th of January Rapata, after consultation with Colonel Whitmore, determined to storm the lower line of earthworks. He told off fifty picked men, and sent them round with instructions to scale the cliffs at the point where the parapet ended. The work was a dangerous and difficult one, for the cliff was very steep and gravelly, and the Hau-Haus crowded to the end of

the trench and fired down, wounding five of the stormers. But to do this they had to expose themselves, and suffered severely from the fire of the men told off to cover the attack. Finally the Ngatiporou succeeded in climbing up under the outer face of the parapet, which they cut through with their spades, and opening a raking fire upon the Hau-Haus drove them out and took possession of the first line of defense.

All night a sap was carried upward toward the second line, with the intention of blowing up the earthworks and storming the main works next morning, and two hundred picked men were assembled in the trenches ready to attack at daybreak. But at two o'clock in the morning a woman cried out from within the pah that the Hau-Haus had all left, leaving only some wounded men and women and children. Her words were not at first believed, and they were considered to be only a ruse to induce the assailants to advance up the hill under the enemy's fire. But at daybreak it was found that the news was true, that the whole of the Hau-Haus had escaped, by means of ropes, down the face of the perpendicular cliff.

Rapata with his men started in pursuit. He followed the Hau-Hau trail for some distance, and then scattered his men in small parties as he guessed that the enemy would scatter in search of food. A hundred and twenty of the Hau-Haus were overtaken and killed, and Rapata returned after an absence of two days. By this time the whites and constabulary had left, as the work had now been done and the constabulary were urgently needed elsewhere. Rapata marched back by a circuitous way, captured eighty more prisoners, men, women and children, whom he brought alive down into the settlement. Te Kooti had lost altogether during the siege and pursuit

a hundred and fifty of his men, but he was still believed in by the natives, three tribes joining him at once, more than making up for the loss he had suffered.

Mr. Atherton and the other volunteers with Colonel Whitmore's force had taken but small share in the second attack upon Te Kooti's position, not being attached to any regular force. Rapata had been greatly struck with the coolness of Mr. Atherton and Wilfrid in his first attack, and astonished at the accuracy of their shooting, and had greeted them very heartily on his return, and invited them to act with his force. They had, therefore, during the siege taken up their position in some rifle-pits in the rear of his party, and from here had done great service to the Ngatiporou by covering them from the enemy's fire, for the Hau-Haus soon learned that it was almost certain death to stand up to take a steady aim above the parapet.

After the defeat of the Hau-Haus many of the natives of Poverty Bay who had joined Te Kooti, and taken a prominent part in the massacres, deserted him, and calmly returned to the settlement as if nothing had taken place, and the authorities allowed them to remain unmolested. The settlers, justly indignant that men who had so lately murdered women and children should be allowed to come down among them with impunity, formed themselves into a vigilance committee, and some of them who had lost relatives in the massacre bound themselves by oath to shoot the next party of ruffians who made their appearance.

An opportunity soon offered. A native who had assisted in murdering Mr. Wylie's son came in, and was shot by Mr. Benson. The following morning, to his astonishment, Benson was warned to attend as juryman at the inquest of his victim. In vain he assured the native

constable that he was the man who had done the deed, and that he ought not therefore to sit. The constable refused to entertain the excuse, and so Benson not only sat on his own trial, but gave evidence against himself, and the jury, among whom was Mr. Atherton, having heard his statement, brought in the following verdict: "We find that the deceased was shot by some person unknown, and served him right."

The day after this verdict was returned Mr. Atherton and Wilfrid, who had been waiting ten days for a coasting craft, sailed for the Mohaka river, and, landing at Mr. Mitford's, borrowed two horses from him, and were soon at The Glade.

"I am afraid I am heavy on a horse still, Wilfrid," Mr. Atherton said as they started, "but this animal may be thankful that I did not ride him the last time I was here. I calculate I must be at least four stone lighter than I was."

"You certainly have lost a good deal of flesh, Mr. Atherton. I almost wonder that you did not continue with our friend Rapata. He declares that he will follow up Te Kooti till he catches him if it takes him a couple of years."

"No, no, Wilfrid," Mr. Atherton laughed, "it is possible to have too much of a good thing. I might jog along with a colonial force well enough and benefit by it, but Rapata and his men would kill me in a week. I do not think those fellows know what it is to be tired. No, I am very well contented, and I intend to do no end of work in the woods and keep myself down to my present weight. There is an immense deal to be done in the way of botanizing. I have already found twelve new sorts of ferns, and I have only just begun, and have not even looked at the orchids yet or the mosses."

Maori. "I AM AFRAID I AM HEAVY ON A HORSE STILL, WILFRID."—Page 296.

"I should have thought, Mr. Atherton, that it would have been well worth your while to go in for collecting and sending home rare and new plants, instead of merely drying specimens for your herbarium. I know new orchids fetch a tremendous price, because a gentleman near us at home had a large house full of them, and I know he used to pay what seemed to me prodigious prices for little scraps of plants not a bit more beautiful than the others, simply because they were rare."

"The idea is a very good one, Wilfrid, and I will think it over. I have never gone in for collecting in that way, for my income has been amply sufficient for my wants, but there can be no doubt that in these days, when people are ready to give such large sums for rare plants, a botanist like myself might make a really good thing of it out here. The woods are literally crowded with rare plants, and it would add to the interest of my excursions. As it is now I simply look for new species, and even here these are hard to discover; but if I took to getting rare specimens for sending home, there would be an unlimited field of work for me. Of course the difficulty is getting them home alive, for in a country like this, where there is practically no winter, they are never in an entirely quiescent state, and would require the most careful packing in cases specially constructed for them, and would need attention on the voyage. Still all this might be managed, and a steward might be paid well to take them under his charge.

"Well, I will think it over, Wilfrid. Your idea certainly seems a good one, and if it pays the great horticulturalists to send out skilled men to collect plants for them from all parts of the world, it should certainly pay me, who am living in the center of one of the most varied groups of vegetation in the world, to send home consignments."

Ten minutes later they rode into the clearing. A loud whoop of welcome was heard as they appeared, and Jack came tearing down from the house to meet them. A moment later Marion appeared at the door, and she too came flying toward them. Mr. and Mrs. Renshaw also appeared on the veranda.

"I need not ask you how you are, my boy," Mr. Renshaw said as Wilfrid, who had leaped from his horse as Marion ran up, hastened forward with her to the house. "Your mother has told us so much about your illness that I hardly anticipated seeing you looking a picture of health. Mr. Atherton, I am delighted to see you. My wife has told me how much we all owe to you both for your care of Wilfrid and for having brought him and my wife safely out of the hands of the natives."

"I am very glad that I was able to be of some little service, Mr. Renshaw. It is quite as pleasant, you know, to be able to aid as it is to be aided, so we will look upon the obligation as mutual. Wilfrid has invited me to take up my quarters here for a day or two until my shanty is put in order again."

"It would be a pleasure to us if you would take up your abode here permanently," Mr. Renshaw said as Mr. Atherton dismounted from his horse and the two men wrung each other's hands warmly. "Jack, take the two horses round to the shed. And now come in. Fortunately dinner is just ready, and I have no doubt you are ready too."

Wilfrid was struck with the change that had come over his father since he had been away. He looked better and stronger than he had ever seen him before, and spoke with a firmness and decision quite new to him. Mr. Renshaw, finding the whole responsibility of the farm upon his shoulders, had been obliged to put aside

his books and to throw himself into the business with vigor. At first the unusual exertion involved by being out all day looking after things had tried him a good deal, but he had gained strength as he went on, and had even come to like the work. The thought that his wife and Wilfrid would be pleased to find everything going on well had strengthened him in his determination to stick to it, and Marion had, as far as the housework allowed her, been his companion when about the farm, and had done her best to make the evenings cheerful and pleasant. They had had a terribly anxious time of it during the week between the arrival of the news of the massacre at Poverty Bay and Mrs. Renshaw's return; but after that their life had gone on quietly, although until the news of the capture of Te Kooti's fortress had arrived, they had naturally been anxious about Wilfrid's safety.

"You are looking wonderfully well and sunburned, father," the lad said as they sat at dinner.

"Your father has been out from morning until night, Wilfrid, managing the farm," Mr. Renshaw said with a glad smile, "and I do think the exercise has done him a great deal of good."

"I am sure it has, mother," Wilfrid agreed. "I am afraid the book has not made much progress, father, since I have been away."

"It has made no progress at all, Wilfrid, and I do not suppose it ever will. Science is all very well when a man can afford to make it his hobby, but I have come to the concluson that a man has no right to ride a hobby while his family have to work to make a living."

"But we were all glad to work, father," Wilfrid said. "And now I am back again there is no reason why you should not return to your work."

"No, Wilfrid. I have been selfish a great deal too long, and indeed, now that I have broken myself into an active life out of doors, I have at present, at any rate, no inclination to take to the pen again. I feel better than I have done for years, and am astonished myself at the work I can get through. As to my appetite, I eat twice as much as I used to, and really enjoy my food. Since the day we heard of the failure of the bank the burden has all been on your shoulders, Wilfrid and your mother's. I am going to take my share of it in the future. As to the book, some one else must write it. I do not suppose it would ever have really paid. I almost wonder now how I could have thought that I out here could have derived any satisfaction from knowing that my work was praised by scientific men at home; beside, to do it properly a man must live among the natives, must travel all over the island and gather the traditions current in every tribe. That I could not do, and if I could have no inclination for it. I have been thinking that I shall ask Mr. Atherton to teach me a little botany, so that I can enjoy a little more intelligently than I can now do the wonders of our forests."

"That I will gladly do, Mr. Renshaw. I am sure it would add greatly to the enjoyment of your life here to become acquainted with the secrets of the marvelous vegetation around. It is extraordinary to me that men should be content to remain in ignorance of the names of even the principal trees and shrubs that meet their eye at every turn. There is not one settler in a hundred can tell you the names of a score of trees in the island. While I have been away I have tried to get the native names of many of the trees that are mostly to be met with, and only in one or two cases could I get any information, although some of the settlers have been living for years among them."

"And now, Mr. Atherton, about what I was saying just now, do not you think it would be more pleasant for you to erect a fresh hut close to ours instead of living by yourself away in the woods? It would be a great pleasure to all of us to have you with us. Your society would brighten our life here. We should have the assistance of your rifle in case the natives broke out again. You would, of course, live with us, but you would have your own hut to retire to when you liked to be alone. What do you say?"

"I say that it is a very kind offer, Mr. Renshaw, and it would certainly be very much more pleasant for me than living out there by myself at the mercy of a native cook. On the condition that you will allow me to pay my share of the expenses of housekeeping I will gladly accept your offer."

"The expenses of housekeeping are next to nothing, Mr. Atherton," Mrs. Renshaw laughed; "but if you make it a condition we must of course agree to your terms, and you shall be permitted to pay your quota to the expenses of the establishment; but I warn you that the amount will not be a heavy one."

"Heavy or light, I shall be glad to pay it, Mrs. Renshaw. The arrangement would be a delightful one for me, for although as a traveler I have necessarily been much alone, I am a gregarious animal, and fond of the company of mankind."

And so two days later a party of natives were set to work, and a hut was erected for Mr. Atherton twenty yards away from the house, and was soon fitted up as his other had been. Wilfrid had at once taken up his own work at the farm, but was now his father's right hand, instead of having as before everything on his shoulders.

The natives in the neighborhood had now settled down

again. From time to time news came that showed that the Hau-Hau rebellion was almost crushed. Colonel Whitmore, having finally completely subdued the Hau-Hau tribes in the north of Wellington and Taranaki, had marched with a strong force divided into four columns and severely punished all the tribes that had joined Te Kooti in the northeastern part of the island. Te Kooti himself, after perpetrating several other massacres of settlers, was a fugitive, hotly hunted by Rapata, who gave him no rest, surprising him several times, and exterminating the last remnants of the band who had escaped with him from the Chatham Islands. Te Kooti himself was now believed to be hiding somewhere in the Waikato country; but he was no longer dangerous, his schemes had utterly failed, his pretensions had even in the native eyes been altogether discredited, and all who had adhered to him had either been killed or punished by the destruction of their villages and clearings. There was not the slightest chance that he would ever again trouble the community.

The settlement on the Mohaka river had grown, and in six months after Wilfrid's return the whole of the land lying between the Allen farm and Mr. Mitford's was taken up, and two or three families had settled beyond Mr. Atherton's holding. At The Glade everything went on prosperously—the animals multiplied, the crops were excellent, and, owing to the many settlers arriving and requiring food until they could raise it for themselves, much better prices were obtained for the produce, and it was no longer necessary to ship it to Napier or Wellington.

Although Mr. Atherton had not gone through any such fatigues as those that he had endured at Poverty Bay he had continued steadily to decrease in weight.

Feeling himself so much lighter and more active on the return from the expedition, he had continued to stick to long and regular exercise, and was out every day, with a native to carry his tin collecting boxes, his presses, ax, and trowel, from breakfast-time until dark. As he steadily refused to take any food with him, and fasted from breakfast-time till supper, the prolonged exercise in the close heat of the woods did its work rapidly, and at the end of a year from the date of his taking up his abode at The Glade he could no longer be called a stout man, and newcomers looked with admiration at his broad shoulders and powerful figure.

"When I first came to New Zealand," he said, "I thought it probable that I should only stay here a few weeks, or at most a few months, and I had a strong doubt whether it would repay my trouble in coming out here. Now I am sure that it was the very best step I ever took. I weighed the other day at Mitford's, and I did not turn eighteen stone, which is nothing out of the way for a man of my height and size. Last time I weighed I pulled down twenty-six. When I go back to England I shall stick to my two meals a day, and go in regularly for racquets and horse exercise."

"And when is that going to be, Mr. Atherton?" Wilfrid asked.

"I have not settled yet, Wilfrid. I have been longer stationary here than I have been in any place since I left college. Occasionally I get a fit of longing to be back in London again, but it seldom lasts long. However, I suppose I shall yield to it one of these days."

"You are doing very well here, Mr. Atherton. You said only the other day that your consignment of plants had sold wonderfully, and that you expected to make nearly a thousand pounds this year."

"That is true enough, Wilfrid; but you see, unfortunately or fortunately, whichever way you like to put it, the thousand pounds are of no importance to me one way or the other. I am really what is generally considered to be a rich man, and from the day I left England, now just two years ago, my income has been simply accumulating, for beyond the two or three pounds a month your mother lets me pay her I spend absolutely nothing."

"It must be very dull for you here, Mr. Atherton, accustomed as you have been to be always either traveling or in London, to be cut off from the world with only just our society, and that of the Allens and Mitfords, and two or three neighbors."

"I do not look dull, do I, Mrs. Renshaw?" Mr. Atherton laughed.

"No; I have never seen you dull since I knew you, Mr. Atherton, not even when you were toiling, exhausted and worn out with that child on your shoulders and the weight of the helpless man on your arms. We shall miss you awfully when you do go; shall we not Marion?" Marion was now nineteen, and had developed, as Wilfrid told her in some surprise—for brothers seldom think their sisters good-looking—into a very pretty girl.

"It is not coming just yet," Mr. Atherton said; "but I have, I think, pretty well exhausted the forest for a distance of fifty miles round, and now that things are settling down I shall take more extensive trips to the mountains in the northeast and the Waikato country, and the strip of land lying north of Auckland. I have never been absent above two or three days at a time; but in future I may be away for weeks. But this will always be my headquarters, Mrs. Renshaw. You see, your husband is becoming a formidable rival of mine here, so I must be off to pastures new."

"You know he did not want to send things home, Mr. Atherton. It was only because you insisted that he did so."

"I am very glad that I did insist, Mrs. Renshaw. As you know, I only went into the trade of plants to give me something to do on my rambles beside looking for new species; but I am sure it has been a capital thing for him. He has always been accustomed to use his brain, and although he now takes a lively interest in farm work, he would in time have found a certain void if he had not taken up this new hobby. As it is, it gives him plenty of outdoor work, and is not only interesting, but pays well; and now that he is thoroughly acquainted with the botany of this part of the island, and knows which things are worth sending home, and the price he can depend upon getting for them he will make a far larger income out of it than he could do from farming. Wilfrid will be quite capable of looking after the interests of the farm."

Another year passed. The clearings at The Glade had been greatly enlarged; but clumps of bush had been judiciously left so as to preserve its sylvan appearance, the long operation of fencing in the whole property had been accomplished, and the number of horses, cattle, and sheep had so increased that the greater part were now sent to graze on Maori land, a small rate per head being paid to the natives. Mr. Atherton had come and gone many times, and had now almost completed his study of the botany of the island. Mr. Renshaw had altogether abandoned the management of the farm to Wilfrid, and devoted himself entirely to the collection of ferns, orchids, and other plants, receiving handsome checks in return for the consignment sent to England by each vessel that sailed from Wellington or Napier. He had

agents at each of these towns, who made arrangements with the stewards of the ships for taking care of the plants on their way home, their remuneration being dependent upon the state in which the consignment arrived in England.

Settlers were now established on both sides of the river for miles above The Glade, and as among these were several who had been officers in the army, or professional men who had come out for the benefit of their families, there was now much cheerful society, and The Glade occupied the same leading position in that part of the settlement that Mr. Mitford's had done on the lower river when they first arrived.

James Allen had now been a year married to the eldest of the Miss Mitfords. His brother had been decidedly refused by Marion when he proposed to her, much to the surprise of her father and mother, who had seen from the frequent visits of their neighbor during the past year how things were going with him, while Wilfrid had been quite indignant at her rejection of his friend.

"Girls are extraordinary creatures," he said to his sister. "I had quite made up my mind for the last six months that you and Bob were going to make a match of it, and thought what a jolly thing it would be to have you settled next to us. I am sure I do not know what you want more. You have known him for three years. He is as steady as possible, and safe to get on well, and as nice a fellow as I know."

"He is all that, Wilfrid, but you see I don't want to marry him. I like him very much in the same way you like him, but I don't like him well enough for that."

"Oh, I suppose you want a wandering prince in disguise," Wilfrid grumbled. "That is the way with girls; they always want something that they cannot get."

"My dear Wilfrid," Marion said with spirit, "when I take to lecturing you as to whom you are to marry it will be quite time for you take to lecturing me; but until I do I cannot allow that you have any right in the matter."

It was seldom indeed that brother and sister differed in opinion about anything, and seeing a tear in Marion's eye Wilfrid at once gave in and admitted himself to be wrong.

"Of course it is no business of mine, Marion, and I beg your pardon. I am sure I shall not wish for a moment that you should marry any one but the man that you choose for yourself. I should certainly have liked you to have married Bob Allen, but if you do not fancy him of course there is an end of it."

This was not the only offer that Marion had received during the year, for there were several young settlers who would have been glad to have installed her as the mistress of their homesteads; but they had each met with the same fate that had now befallen Bob Allen.

The next time Mr. Atherton came back he said, "I have taken my last ramble and gathered my last plant."

"What! are you going home?" Mrs. Renshaw exclaimed.

"Yes, I am going home," he said more seriously than he usually spoke. "I have been away three years now, and have pretty thoroughly ransacked the island. I have discovered nearly eighty new species of plants and two or three entirely new families, so I have done enough for honor; beside, I am wanted at home. An old aunt has died and left me a considerable sum of money, just because I had plenty of my own before, I suppose. It is another instance of female perversity. So I have had a letter from my solicitor saying that I am really wanted; but in any case I should have gone now or in another

month or two. I begin to feel that I have had enough of wandering, and at thirty-eight it is time to settle down if you are ever going to do so."

There was a silence round the table as he ceased speaking, for all felt that the loss would be a serious one, and although Mr. Atherton had tried to speak lightly they could see that he too felt the approaching end of their close friendship.

"Are you going to start at once?" Mr. Renshaw asked.

"No, I shall give myself a fortnight or three weeks before I sail. I have all the plants I gathered this time to dry and prepare properly; beside, I should like a quiet stay with you before I say good-by. You see, I have not seen much of you during the last year."

Nothing further was said on the subject, which none of them liked to touch on. For the next two days the house seemed strangely quiet.

"By the way, what has become of young Allen?" Mr. Atherton said at dinner on the third day. "You told me every one was well, so I suppose he is away from home, as I have not seen him since I came, and he used to be a very regular visitor." There was a momentary silence and then Mrs. Renshaw said:

"I do not think he is away from home, though he may be, for he was talking the other day of looking out for a fresh piece of land for himself. Now that his brother is married I suppose it is only natural that he should think of setting up for himself. The farm is of course their joint property, but I suppose they will make some arrangement for his brother to take over his share."

"Naturally," Mr. Atherton agreed, "young Allen would not care about remaining now that his brother is married. When one of two partners marries it generally breaks up the partnership, and beside, he will of course

be wanting to have a place of his own, and the holding is not large enough to divide."

After dinner Wilfrid strolled out with Mr. Atherton.

"I dare say you saw, Mr. Atherton, that your question about Bob Allen fell rather as a bombshell among us. There is no reason why you, who are a great friend, should not know the truth. The fact is, to my astonishment, Marion has thought proper to refuse Bob Allen. I was never more surprised in my life. I had always looked upon it as certain that she would accept him, especially as she has refused three or four good offers this year. One never can understand girls."

Mr. Atherton was silent for a minute or two. Then he said:

"I thought too, Wilfrid, that it would have come off. I have always thought so. Well, well." Then after a pause he went on: "I had intended to go over in the morning to see him. I like the lad, and had an idea of offering to advance him a sum of money to set up in a place of his own without loss of time. Then the young couple would have had a fair start in life without having to wait two or three years or to go through the rough work at the first start in a settler's life. The money would of course have been nothing to me, and it would have been satisfactory to have lent a helping hand toward seeing your sister married and happy. And so she has refused him. Well, I will take a turn by myself, Wilfrid."

And to the young fellows surprise Mr. Atherton turned off and started at a brisk pace up the glade.

"He is evidently as vexed at Marion's throwing over Bob Allen as I am," Wilfrid said to himself, as he looked after him. "I wish he would give her a good talking to, she would think more of his opinion than she does of mine.

CHAPTER XVIII.

IN ENGLAND.

"I SUPPOSE you have not settled yet as to what ship you will return by, Atherton?" Mr. Renshaw asked as the party were gathered in the veranda in the evening.

"No," Mr. Atherton replied, absently watching the smoke of his cigar as it curled up, "nothing is at all settled; my plans seem to be quite vague now."

"What do you mean, Mr. Atherton?" Mrs Renshaw asked in surprise, for Mr. Atherton's plans were generally mapped out very decidedly. "How is it that your plans are vague? I thought you said two days ago that you should go down to Wellington about the 20th."

"I did not mean to say that they were vague, Mrs. Renshaw; did I really say so?"

"Why, of course you did," Mrs. Renshaw said; "and it is not often that you are vague about anything."

"That shows that you do not understand my character, Mrs. Renshaw," Mr. Atherton said in his usual careless manner. "I am the vaguest of men—a child of chance, a leaf blown before the wind."

Wilfrid laughed. "It would have taken a very strong wind when we first knew you."

"I am speaking metaphorically, Wilfrid. I am at London, and the idea occurs to me to start for the Amazon and botanize there for a few months. I pack up and start the next morning. I get there and do not like the place, and say to myself it is too hot here, let me

study the Arctic flora at Spitzbergen. If I act upon an idea promptly, well and good, but if I allow any time to elapse between the idea striking me and my carrying the thing into execution, there is never any saying whether I may not go off in an entirely different groove during the interval."

"And is there any chance of your going off in any other groove now, Atherton?" Mr. Renshaw asked.

"No, I think not; just a remote possibility perhaps, but not more than that. It is so indefinitely small, indeed, that you may—yes, I think you may safely calculate upon my starting on the day I said, or if I find a ship at Wellington going on a trading excursion among the islands, or up to the strait, or to Japan, I may likely enough take a passage in her."

"But I thought you said that your business required you to be at home, Mr. Atherton?"

"Yes, I suppose that is so, Wilfrid; but I dare say my solicitor would manage it just as well if I did not turn up. Solicitors are people who, as far as I can see, consider it their duty to bother you, but if they find that you pay no attention to their letters they manage somehow or other to get on very well without you. I believe they go into a court and make affidavits, and get an order authorizing them to sign for you. I do not know how it generally is done, but that is my experience of them so far."

Marion had said little that evening, and had indeed been very quiet for the last few days. She was somewhat indignant at Wilfrid's interference in what she considered her affairs, and felt that although her father and mother had said nothing, they too were somewhat disappointed, and would have been glad had she accepted Bob Allen. Beside she had reasons of her own for being out

of spirits. After breakfast the next morning Mr. Atherton said: "Marion, when you have finished your domestic duties and can be spared, suppose you put on your hat and come for a ramble with me."

There was nothing unusual in the request, for the girl often accompanied him in his rambles when he was not going far into the forest.

"I shall be ready in half an hour, if your highness can wait so long."

"I am in no hurry, child, and will smoke a pipe on the veranda until you are ready."

Marion always enjoyed these walks with Mr. Atherton. He was at all times a pleasant companion, and when alone with her always exerted himself to amuse her, though he sometimes vexed her by talking to her as if she were a child. To-day he was much more silent than usual, and more than once she looked up in wonder at his face as he walked along puffing at his pipe, with his hands deep in his jacket pockets and his eyes bent on the ground.

"A penny for your thoughts, Mr. Atherton," she said at last with a laugh. "It seems to me that you would have got on just as well without me."

"Well, I was just thinking that I was a fool to ask you to come with me, child." Marion opened her eyes in surprise. "You see, my dear," he went on, "we all make fools of ourselves sometimes. I started in life by making a fool of myself. I fell in love with a woman whom I thought perfection. She was an arrant flirt, and was only amusing herself with me till she hooked a young lord for whom she was angling. That was what sent me roaming for the first time; and, as you know, having once started I have kept it up ever since, that is till I came out here. I had intended to stay six months;

I have been here three years. Why have I stopped so long? Simply, child, because I have again made a fool of myself. I do not think I was conscious of it for the first two years, and it was only when I saw, as I thought, that young Allen would win you, that I recognized that a man of thirty-seven was fool enough to love a child just eighteen years younger than myself. At the same time I was not fool enough to think that I had the smallest chance. I could not stop here and watch another winning you, and at the same time I was so weak that I could not go away altogether; and so you see I compromised matters by going away for weeks and sometimes months at a time, returning with the expectation each time of hearing that it was settled. Now I hear that you have refused him, and just as a drowning man grasps at a straw, I resolved to have my fate absolutely settled before I sail. Don't be afraid of saying 'no,' dear. I have never for a moment looked for any other answer, but I think that I would rather have the 'no' than go away without it, for in after years I might be fool enough to come to think that possibly, just possibly, the answer, had I asked the question, might have been 'yes.'"

He had stopped in his walk when he began to speak, and stood facing Marion, who had not raised her eyes while he was speaking. Then she looked frankly up in his face.

"Do you think I did not know," she said softly, "and didn't you really know too? You are not so wise a man as I thought you. Why, ever since I have known you it seems to me that—that——"

"That you have loved me, Marion; is it possible?" he said, taking her hand.

"Of course it is possible," she said almost pettishly; "how could I help it, I should like to know?"

Dinner had been waiting for some time before Mr. Atherton and his companion returned from their ramble.

"Twenty minutes late!" Wilfrid shouted as they approached the house; "have you been losing yourselves in the bush?"

"I think that it has been just the other way, Wilfrid," Mr. Atherton said as he came up to the group gathered in the veranda.

"How do you mean?" Wilfrid asked.

"I mean we have been finding each other."

"Finding each other," Wilfrid repeated vaguely. "Why, were you both lost?"

"I was, Wilfrid. Mrs. Renshaw, I have found your daughter, and am going, with your permission and that of her father, to keep her. I am a good bit older than she is, but as she says she does not mind that, I hope that you will not, and at least I can promise to do all in my power to make her happy."

"I am surprised, Mr. Atherton; surprised and glad too," Mrs. Renshaw said, while Mr. Renshaw grasped Mr. Atherton's hand and shook it heartily.

"My dear sir, there is no one in the world to whom I could intrust Marion's happiness so gladly and heartily. I own that it is a surprise to me, as well as to her mother, but we are both delighted at the choice she has made."

By this time Marion and her mother had gone indoors together. Wilfrid had not yet spoken; his surprise was still too great for words.

"Well, Wilfrid," Mr. Atherton said, turning to him, "I hope your disapproval of Marion's conduct on this occasion is not so great as it was when you were talking to me yesterday."

"I hardly know what to say yet, you have taken me so

by surprise; but I am awfuly glad—you know that don't you? There is no one in the world I should like Marion to marry so much, only somehow it never occurred to me."

"That is natural enough, Wilfrid. However, now that it has occurred to you, and you approve of it, we must hope that Marion will be restored to your good graces again."

"I have been making an ass of myself," Wilfrid said penitently; "but you believe that I am awfully glad, don't you? I was disappointed about Bob, but then, you see, I never thought about you. Why, you must know, Mr. Atherton, what I think of you and how I care for you, and how I look up to you. Somehow it never seemed possible to me that a man like you could fall in love."

"And much more improbable still, Wilfrid, that your sister would fall in love with me. I understand you, lad. We have been very close friends for the last three years, haven't we? I have been something like a very big and very old brother to you, and now we are going to be brothers in earnest;" and their hands closed in a grip that spoke volumes for the sincerity and depth of their feelings. Then Wilfrid ran into the house and threw his arms round his sister. "I have been an awful fool, Marion," he said; "but you see, I never dreamed of this."

"And are you really pleased, Wilfrid?"

"Pleased! I am delighted. Why, you know, I think he is the finest fellow in the world; and has he not done everything for us, and stood by me and nursed me, and carried me for miles, and saved mother's life and mine? But it never entered my mind that you had fallen in love with each other."

"I do not know why it shouldn't, Wilfrid. Why shouldn't I think as much of him as you do?"

"I do not know, I am sure, Marion; but I confess I never did think of it. Did you, mother?"

"Once or twice, Wilfrid. About a year ago it did cross my mind once or twice, but that was all. They say mothers are keen-sighted as far as their daughters are concerned; but either I am less keen-sighted than mothers in general, or Marion is deeper than other girls."

"Well, mother, we shall have lots of time to talk this over," Wilfrid said. "Dinner has been waiting nearly an hour, and even this wonderful business cannot have taken away all our appetites. Everything is ready; shall I call them in?" Wilfrid had, however, still a few minutes to wait, for the two men were engaged in earnest conversation outside.

When they came in at last Mr. Renshaw kissed his daughter fondly. "God bless you, my child!" he said. "You have made a wise choice indeed, and I am sure that you will be very happy woman."

It was a quiet meal, for all were too happy to talk much. After it was over the two men strolled out together and renewed their conversation, and Mr. Renshaw presently called to his wife to join them. Marion had gone to her room, and Wilfrid was about to start to the other end of the farm when Mr. Atherton called him.

"Come and join our consultation, Wilfrid. You are as much concerned in it as any of us, and I rely upon your assistance to bring round these two very obstinate people to my side of the question. I should say our side, for of course Marion is one with me in the matter. You see, I am a rich man, Wilfrid—really a rich man, and I naturally wish that Marion should be made as happy as possible. I do not think she would be as happy as possible if

she were in England with me, with a nice place in the country, and a town-house, and most things that money could bring her, if she knew that her father and mother were out here living a life which, although they have admirably adapted themselves to it, is yet very different to that to which they have been all their lives accustomed.

"Now, owing to this absurd freak of my aunt in making me her heir when my income was already five times as much as I could spend, I have the nuisance of a large landed estate on my hands. There is a large house upon it which I suppose Marion and I will have to occupy occasionally; and there is another house, which is known as the dower house, and which is a very snug and comfortable abode. Now, it is quite clear that I am the last sort of a man to look after an estate. It would worry me most out of my mind, and would be a perpetual annoyance.

"What I propose is that your father and mother shall come home and take possession of the dower house, and that your father should act as my agent. Living on the spot, he would be able to keep an eye on the tenants, receive rents, and that sort of thing, and still be able to devote a considerable portion of his time to his favorite pursuits. I should have the advantage of having an agent I could absolutely rely upon, and Marion and I would have the comfort of having her father and mother close at hand. It would be a little lonely for you for a bit, Wilfrid; but you are nearly nineteen now, and will, unless I am mistaken, ere many years have passed, be bringing a mistress to The Glade. I fancy you go over to Mitford's a good deal oftener than there is any absolute occasion for, and although Kate is only sixteen yet, I have a shrewd suspicion that you have both pretty well made up your minds about the future."

Wilfrid colored and laughed. "I don't know that we are as far advanced as that; but I do hope that some day it may be as you say. But about this other affair. What do my father and mother say? It seems to me it would be a splendid arrangement."

"Of course it would, Wilfrid; a splendid arrangement, for Marion and me especially. That is what I am trying to persuade them; but your mother has developed quite a new line of obstinacy, and your father is just as bad."

"Don't you see, Wilfrid," Mrs. Renshaw said with tears in her eyes, "it is only an excuse on Mr. Atherton's——"

"Harry, my dear madam, Harry," Mr. Atherton interrupted. "We have arranged it is to be Harry in future."

"On Harry's part," Mrs. Renshaw went on, "to provide an income for us."

"But I have got to provide an income for some one," Mr. Atherton said. "There must be an agent to look after the property for me; necessarily that agent must have a salary; and why in the name of good sense should not your husband be that agent as well as any one else?"

"But you are offering a great deal too high a salary," Mr. Renshaw urged. "You could get an excellent agent for less than half the sum you are talking about."

"Not at all," Mr. Atherton replied; "I must have a gentleman, both for my own sake and that of the tenants, and to get a gentleman of high character and perfectly trustworthy, I must necessarily pay him a good salary. I shall be a good deal in town, and my representative must therefore be able to occupy a good position in the county; besides, as I have told you, my income now, with this absurd addition, amounts to something like six thousand a year. Why, in the name of goodness, should I not be allowed, if I choose, to pay

two or three hundred a year over market price to my agent when it will afford my wife the gratification of having her parents near her, and me the pleasure of having two dear friends as my next neighbors. Beside, The Glade will not be a bit too large for you when you marry, Wilfrid, and in that case either you will have to start in a fresh place and begin all your work over again, or your father would have to turn out to make room for you. I consider it preposterous. What do you say, Wilfrid?"

"I do think it would be a splendid arrangement, mother," Wilfrid answered. "You know well enough that I shall be very sorry to lose you and father; but it would be awfully nice for Marion, and I do think that though, as Mr. Atherton says, you and father have fallen in splendidly with your life here, the other would be in every way better suited to you. I can understand your feelings in the matter; but the same time I think that after Mr. Atherton having saved your life and mine, his feelings and wishes should influence you very much."

"If you hesitate any longer," Mr. Atherton said, "I shall go in and fetch Marion out. I have not told her about my plan yet, for in fact we had other things to talk about; but when I tell her, and she adds her voice to ours, I am sure you will not be able to refuse any longer."

"Mrs. Renshaw exchanged a look with her husband. "It is not necessary," she said in a broken voice. "We accept, Harry."

"That is right," Mr. Atherton said as he wrung Mr. Renshaw's hand warmly, and then affectionately kissed Mrs. Renshaw. "Now we are going to be a very happy and united family. Now, go in and tell Marion."

"Tell her yourself," Mrs. Renshaw smiled, wiping her eyes; and Mr. Atherton took his way to the house.

Marion was indeed delighted with the news. The thought of leaving her mother and father behind had been the one drawback to her happiness. She had been her mother's right hand and her father's companion. She had thought how terribly they would miss her, and how, as years went on, they would, far more than now, feel the difference between their present life and that they had formerly led. The news that they would be always near her and settled in a comfortable home filled her with delight. A few minutes after Mr. Atherton entered the house she ran out to her father and mother and threw her arms fondly around them. "Is it not happiness, mother," she cried, "to think that we shall still be together?"

"If you are not a happy woman, child, it will be your own fault," her father said. "I consider you a marvelously lucky girl."

"As if I did not know that!" she replied, laughing through her tears.

Mr. Atherton did not sail quite as soon as he had intended. A church had recently been erected at the central settlement, and a clergyman established there, and a month after matters were settled between him and Marion their wedding was celebrated, almost every settler on the Mohaka being present. The newly-married couple returned to The Glade for a week, Mr. and Mrs. Renshaw and Wilfrid remaining as the guests of Mr. Mitford. At the end of that time they returned, and with Mr. and Mrs. Renshaw sailed for Napier, where they took ship for England.

"What would you have done if I had sailed away for England without ever mustering up courage to speak to you, Marion?" Mr. Atherton said as he stood by the bulwark with her that evening taking their last look at New Zealand.

"I should not have let you go, sir," his wife said saucily; "didn't I know that you cared for me, and had I not refused all sorts of offers for your sake? I don't know what I should have done, or what I should have said, but I am quite sure I should not have let you go unless I found that I had been making a mistake all along. It would have been ridiculous indeed to have sacrificed the happiness of two lives merely because you had some absurd ideas about your age."

"I never thought you cared for me, Marion, never."

"That is because you never took the trouble to find out," his wife retorted. "Men are foolish creatures sometimes, even the wisest of them."

Marion Atherton's life was one of almost perfect happiness. Mr. Atherton entirely gave up his wanderings abroad, and by dint of devotion to racquets and tennis in summer, and of hunting and shooting in winter, he kept down his tendency toward corpulence. He was an energetic magistrate, and one of the most popular men in the country. Mr. Renshaw resumed his former studies in archæology, but they were now the amusement instead of being the object of his life, and he made an excellent agent to his son-in-law. Standing in the relation he did to Mr. and Mrs. Atherton, he and Mrs. Renshaw shared in their popularity, and occupied a good position in the county.

Three years after their return to England they received the news that Kate Mitford had changed her name, and was installed as mistress at The Glade. Every five years Wilfrid and his wife, and as time went on his family, paid a visit to England. He became one of the leading men of the colony. A few years after his marriage Mr. and Mrs. Mitford had returned to England for good, and James Allen and Wilfrid succeeded to his

business as a trader, and carried it on with energy and success, Mr. Atherton advancing Wilfrid sufficient capital to enable them to extend their business largely. In time The Glade became Wilfrid's summer residence only, the headquarters of the firm being established at Napier. It is now conducted by his sons, he himself having returned home with his wife and daughters with a fortune amply sufficient to enable them to live at ease. Marion was pleased when, two years after her arrival in England, she heard from Wilfrid that Bob Allen had married the daughter of an officer settled on the Mohaka. The Grimstones both did well, and became prosperous farmers. Jack remained in Wilfrid's service until he left the colony, and is now a trusted agent of his sons in their dealings with the natives.

THE END.